18

53

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE

W. M. RYBURN

T:31
N50
1:50

INDIAN BRANCH

Rs. 3

Teaching in India Series, IX

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
3 NOV 1950
MADRAS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
With Compliments

TEACHING IN INDIA SERIES

I. SUGGESTIONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN INDIA. By H. DIPPIE. *Fourth impression.* English edition, Rs. 2-12. Hindi edition. Re. 1-2

II. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN INDIA. By W. M. RYBURN. *Fifth edition.* Rs. 2-8

III. THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY. By E. A. MACNEE. *Third edition. In the press*

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS IN INDIA. By W. M. RYBURN. *Third edition.* Rs. 3-12. Urdu edition. Rs. 2-0

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF HISTORY IN INDIA. By V. D. GHATE. *Fourth edition.* Rs. 3-12

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH SPELLING IN INDIA. By H. R. BHATIA. *Second edition* Re. 1-12

VIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF NEW-TYPE TESTS IN INDIA. By E. W. MENZEL. *Second edition.* Rs. 3-8

IX. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE IN INDIA. By W. M. RYBURN. *Third edition.* Rs. 3. Urdu edition. Re. 1-4

X. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF READING IN INDIA. By E. W. MENZEL. Rs. 2-8

XI. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY IN INDIA. By GHANSHAM DASS. *Second edition.* Rs. 4-4

XIV. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF LIBRARIES IN INDIA. By S. R. RANGANATHAN. Rs. 2-8

XV. PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING. By W. M. RYBURN. *Third impression.* Rs. 3

XVI. INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY. By W. M. RYBURN. Rs. 4-8

Suggestions for
THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE

BY

W. M. RYBURN, M.A., LITT. D.
Christian High and Normal School, Kharar, E. Punjab

INDIAN BRANCH
GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS CAPE TOWN
Geoffrey Cumberlege, Publisher to the University

First published 1940
Second edition 1943
Reprinted 1947
Third edition 1950

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. 1450
EGMORE, MADRAS-600 008

PRINTED IN INDIA AT THE DIOCESAN PRESS, MADRAS, AND PUBLISHED BY
GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, MADRAS

PREFACE

In these days when the mother-tongue is taking its rightful place in our schools, it is very necessary that teachers, and those who are training, should have their attention directed to the various methods of teaching the mother-tongue. This part of teachers' training work has been neglected. We must use the best available methods, make experiments with methods used in other countries, and do the best we can to make the subject as fascinating to our pupils as it should and can be. This book has been written in the hope that it may suggest to teachers ways of doing this, and may help to put the teaching of the mother-tongue on an equality with the teaching of other subjects as far as method is concerned. It has been written with Urdu in view, but the principles involved apply to all languages.

I wish to thank the members of the staff of the Christian High School, Kharar, for their help and advice, especially Mr Abdul Majid, Pt Hans Raj, M. Abdul Sattar and Mr Masih Das. I am also grateful to Dr F. C. Laubach for permission to use material he furnished for Chapter XIV; to M. Shafi-ud-Din Nayyar for permission to quote some of his Urdu poems from his book, *Bachchon ka Tohfa*, and to the Oxford University Press for permission to use some of the material from Chapter X of my *Theory and Practice of Christian Education*.

Kharar W. M. Ryburn
4 *February* 1940

NOTE TO THIRD EDITION

In this edition the chapter on the Teaching of Writing, previously written with reference to Urdu, has been rewritten with reference to Hindi by Rev. E. W. Menzel with the assistance of Miss Hedwig Schaeffer. The Urdu Writing Scale previously given in Appendix I has been replaced by a Hindi Writing Scale worked out by Mr Menzel.

W. M. R.

CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	1
II.	Oral Work	10
III.	Reading and the Reader	28
IV.	The Teaching of Writing	60
V.	Written Work	69
VI.	The Teaching of Grammar	87
VII.	The Teaching of Spelling	93
VIII.	The Teaching of Poetry	101
IX.	Creative Writing	110
X.	Using the Play Way	120
XI.	Individual Work	141
XII.	The Project Method	153
XIII.	Story-Telling	159
XIV.	Teaching Adults to Read	168
Appendixes		
I.	A Hindi Writing Scale	175
II.	Bibliography	180
Index		182

I
INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE of the mother-tongue is gradually being recognized. Those who are keenly interested in the progress of real education in India, understanding the vital position of the mother-tongue in life, are gradually changing things for the better. It is at best a slow process, however, and it is remarkable how many secondary school teachers, still obsessed with the place English has always had, prefer to place more stress on it than on the mother-tongue, in spite of the fact that for a great many pupils the time given to English is largely wasted. They do not take it far enough to get over the drudgery of learning to a position where they can read English books with ease and pleasure, and it has no utilitarian value for them as they do not take up work for which English is necessary. This is especially true of the large numbers who live in villages and do not migrate to the towns. Many of these do not go further than the eighth class. The day is now in sight, however, when English will be only a second language, necessary for those who are taking up certain occupations and professions, but no longer in a position to ruin the whole curriculum. The mother-tongue will soon take its rightful place both as a medium of instruction and as a means of culture.

This being so, it is high time that a great deal more attention was paid to the teaching of the mother-tongue and to the methods of teaching it in Primary, Middle and High Schools. It is time that the idea that the periods when the mother-tongue is taught are a welcome interlude in the more strenuous and important business of mathematics and English was dispelled. There is need for propaganda which will enable

the teachers of the mother-tongue to escape from the feeling of inferiority which has enveloped them. There is need for systematic propaganda which will convince the public that, without exception, this is the most important subject in the curriculum, and that therefore its teacher is the most important teacher in the school; which will educate the Universities to make passing in the mother-tongue compulsory in the matriculation examination. English and mathematics and their teachers must be dethroned from the positions they have usurped.

Now it will be readily admitted that, as a rule, the teacher of the mother-tongue is not as well educated as the teacher of many other subjects; that is, in the middle and high classes. The teacher of mathematics or English or science is a graduate who has had training in an institution where all the knowledge of what is going on in other countries, and of the latest methods of teaching from all over the world, is available. The teacher of the mother-tongue, on the other hand, is almost always a man who does not know English, and although superior to his graduate colleague in his knowledge of the mother-tongue and of the classical languages, he has not had the advantage of the training that the latter has had; above all, he has not had the advantage which a knowledge of English can give him at present in enabling him to acquaint himself with all the information that he can get from English books on educational subjects. The material available in the mother-tongue on such subjects is at present very meagre. Until such time as there is an adequate educational literature in the mother-tongue the teacher of that subject is going to remain at a great disadvantage, and his subject will therefore suffer.

For some time an effort should be made to encourage graduates who can read English to study the mother-tongue and the classical languages in order to get the necessary qualifications for teaching the mother-tongue. We will then have

teachers who combine the qualifications of the graduate in English with those of the present teachers of the mother-tongue. This will give us a far better chance of effecting an improvement in teaching methods. Even those of lower grade who teach in primary schools, if they are matriculates and can be persuaded to keep up their English, will be able to gain help and inspiration which at present they lack. If teachers of the mother-tongue with English qualifications were encouraged by Educational Departments we would find greatly increased efficiency in the whole of our school work.

Whatever is done, however, it is the duty of all who have the real education of this country at heart to seek to do everything they can to bring to the primary school whatever good things have been tried out and tested in other countries. They must experiment with new methods and new ways of approach, new philosophies of education, new values and new ideas, which can be tried out in Indian conditions, modified, accepted or rejected, but which will give new inspiration, interest and courage to those who have not had these opportunities. Those who have had these opportunities should try to pass on what they have discovered. Thus they can help to make the primary school a new place and the mother-tongue a new subject which will open up before the primary school teacher untold possibilities of making his school a place of real life, where his pupils will gain their first insight into their national heritage and start out on the right road to equip themselves for the life of service to their country which lies ahead of them.

There is perhaps no greater service that can be given to education in India today than to pass on the good ideas we have to the large number of primary school teachers who have not had the chance to discover them for themselves, until the primary school teacher will be just as well equipped for his job as is his secondary school colleague today.

There is plenty of topsy-turveydom in Indian education. The most important person in the educational scale is the teacher of Class I in the primary school. He also has the most difficult task. Yet we require of a person who wishes to fill that position the lowest educational qualifications, and give him the least adequate training (at least we have done so in the past). We pay him the lowest salary. And then we expect so much from him. Therefore the more help we can give him, especially in this most important matter of the teaching of the mother-tongue, the more we are doing for the cause of education in India. This is the reason for this book.

At the same time it must be remembered that the mother-tongue is not the concern solely of the particular teacher who teaches it. Of course in primary schools separation of subjects does not usually arise, as the same teacher usually teaches all subjects to the one class. But higher up the school, where we get specialist teachers, this does have to be watched. Really the mother-tongue is the basis of all work that is done in all classes where it is the medium of instruction. It is more than just one of the subjects in school. I quote below from *The Hadow Report* and what is said about English applies, in India, to the mother-tongue:

> At the same time English should not be treated as an isolated subject confined to certain definite periods assigned to it in the time-table. In every branch of the curriculum pupils should be trained to express their ideas, either orally or in writing, in accurate and appropriate language. It will therefore be advisable to exercise a careful supervision over the use of English in every subject.[1]

Again, to quote from that enthusiast, George Sampson:

> In plain words and in the ordinary sense, English is not a school subject at all. It is a condition of school life. . . . Of all school lessons the English one has usually made least effect

[1] *The Education of the Adolescent* (Hadow Report), Board of Education, London, p. 190.

upon the pupils' minds and least appeal to their liking. . . . But as we have said, English is not really a subject at all. It is a condition of existence rather than a subject of instruction. It is an inescapable circumstance of life and concerns every English-speaking person from the cradle to the grave. The lesson in English is not merely one occasion for the inculcation of knowledge; it is part of the child's initiation into the life of man.[1]

(Here again in this quotation English, of course, is the mother-tongue.) Mr Sampson's book, *English for the English* can be recommended to all those who are keenly interested in the position and importance of the mother-tongue. Again and again while writing about English in England he says exactly those things which need to be said about the mother-tongue in India.

It is true then, that we cannot have true education in our schools or, for that matter, in our Universities either, until the mother-tongue is given its rightful place in the curriculum and in the life of the pupil and student; and, consequently, until a great deal of work has been done on the methods of teaching it. For a great deal depends on the teaching methods employed. With all the good will in the world we shall ruin our efforts if the wrong methods are used.

The mother-tongue is important for a number of other reasons. First, thought and language are inextricably linked together. 'For if thought and inner speech are so closely interwoven that they grow and decay together, we cannot cultivate one without cultivating the other. And training in the use of the mother-tongue—the tongue in which a child thinks and dreams—becomes the first essential of schooling and the finest instrument of human culture.'[2] It is therefore

[1] G. Sampson, *English for the English,* Cambridge University Press, pp. 24-5.
[2] P. B. Ballard, *Thought and Language,* University of London Press, p. 17.

of the greatest importance for our pupils to get a firm grounding in their mother-tongue for at the same time we are giving them a firm grounding in their intellectual life.

Secondly the mother-tongue is important because it is the medium by which we communicate thought both by speaking and writing. For the ordinary intercourse of life it is important that we should be able to say and write exactly what we mean, and to do so clearly and simply. One realizes this when listening to people or when reading letters, and one sees how the teaching of the mother-tongue has been neglected and how people suffer in consequence. Words indeed more often hide thought than reveal it, but with those who are not politicians this is usually not on purpose. With most people it is the result of a grave defect in their education.

Whatever boys and girls may do when they leave school, whatever calling they may take up, whether it be in town or village, in factory or in field, they must be able to read, speak and write, because without these abilities they are without the means of ordinary human intercourse. Before a child can realize the fullness of life in all its aspects, and before he can use the powers that God has given him, he must be able to use his mother-tongue, which is the tool that is absolutely essential in all kinds of work. In other words no child can grow up to be a good and useful citizen unless he has been properly educated in the use of his mother-tongue, and in the appreciation of all that he can gain through a knowledge of his mother-tongue. All the virtues that are necessary in a good citizen, clear thinking, clear expression, sincerity of thought and feeling and action, fulness of emotional and creative life, all these things can be properly cultivated and developed only if sufficient attention is paid to the foundation of emotional and intellectual life, the mother-tongue.

Thirdly, the teaching of the mother-tongue is important because on it depends the growth of our pupils: growth in their

intellectual life; growth in knowledge; growth in ability to express themselves; growth in creative and productive ability. The growth and development of our emotional life especially, greatly depends on how the mother-tongue is taught. The emotional effect of literature and poetry is something which is of vital importance in the development of personality. This emotional training and development depends absolutely on the mother-tongue. Literature in a foreign language, for all but a few exceptional people, can never perform the function that is performed by literature in the mother-tongue.

We always do a thing better if we know what we are trying to do. Our methods are more likely to be to the point if we first decide what we want to do. What then are the aims that we should have before us when teaching the mother-tongue? Some have already been implied.

1. To give our pupils such a command of their ordinary tool, language, that they can say simply and clearly what they want to say, and write simply and clearly what they want to write. In other words to teach them to express themselves clearly and simply.

> We should be content at first with clearness without correctness—if we cannot get both. Clearness is the greater achievement; correctness can be made a matter of habit. The unforgivable sin in a pupil is not ungrammatical speech, but muddled speech. . . . The definite practical aim of our class work is to teach children (1) how to say a plain thing in a plain way, (2) how to hear a plain thing in a plain way, (3) how to read a plain thing in a plain way, and (4) how to write a plain thing in a plain way. The teacher must, of course, be able to do these things before he can teach others to do them.[1]

2. To give our pupils a medium through which they can express themselves, not only for purposes of intercourse, but to express their feelings, thoughts and experiences so that

[1] G. Sampson, op. cit., p. xii.

they may have the great satisfaction that such expression gives, and may have the chance of the mental, emotional and moral development for which such expression is essential. This expression may be oral or written.

3. To teach the pupil to read for information and for pleasure; to introduce him gradually to the joys of great prose and poetry, and to show him what stores of information there are in books; in short, to cultivate in him the reading habit.

4. To help the pupil to develop his creative faculties. He has in his mother-tongue a medium through which he can give expression, in different directions, to the creative urge that is in him. The teaching of the mother-tongue should always have as one of its most important aims the encouragement of creative work.

5. To give training in logical thought and its expression. This is perhaps an indirect aim and is the aim of all education, but since the mother-tongue should figure so largely in the school life of the pupil, this aim should always be kept before the teacher. In the same way the teacher should always have before him the aim of training the pupil in intellectual, emotional and spititual honesty. Here again there are exceptional opportunities given to the teacher of the mother-tongue. He should always be careful to see that his pupils write and say exactly what they think and not what they think they ought to think and feel. The teaching of the mother-tongue can in this way play a big part in the development of the personality.

The work with the mother-tongue will divide itself into distinct aspects although in actual practice it is perhaps difficult to separate them. There is the receptive side of the work and the expressive side. We can neglect neither. It is necessary for the pupil to understand thoughts and feelings as he reads. It is, of course, necessary at the beginning for him to understand and learn the mechanics of reading and writing. There are many things that he simply has to learn.

There is drill work that must be done. But there is also, going on at the same time as the receptive work, the expressive side of the work. The pupil, right from the beginning, must be given all the opportunities he wants for expressing himself even though his efforts appear crude. Even though his efforts are uncertain to start with, if given encouragement and the opportunities necessary for bringing out his creative powers, he will in most cases soon begin to surprise his teacher. He will express himself for his own pleasure. He will express himself for the benefit of others. He will develop his thoughts and feelings. To do this he must of course have command of his mother-tongue. Given that command we will find growing up a generation with a new spirit.

The mother-tongue is at once a tool, a source of joy and happiness and knowledge, a director of taste and feeling, and a means of using the highest powers that God has given us, where we come closest to Him; that is, our creative powers.

II

ORAL WORK

OUR AIM in oral work is to help our children to learn to speak correctly, to express their meaning clearly and simply so that they may be easily understood, and to speak interestingly. In the first stages we should aim at preventing self-consciousness from developing, or at getting rid of it if it has already developed. We should help our children to speak naturally about their experiences, and about things which interest them, just as they do among themselves. So often there is a classroom tone or a school tone which is most unnatural. We should aim at preventing this from appearing. At first we should not pay much attention to correctness. That will come gradually and work can be going on in connexion with it all the time. In the beginning correctness and polish and grammar do not matter so much. But we should strive for force, vividness, and life in the oral work. So often these are natural in children but they are suppressed and disappear at school.

We must always remember that oral work and speech training are two of the best ways of teaching writing. If children can express themselves well when they talk, they will, in the great majority of cases, be able to write well, clearly and vividly. Often the secret of teaching pupils to write well is to persuade them to write as they speak. Besides this, oral expression is one of the best means for the development of the personality. Most people realize themselves more through speech than through writing.

I suppose I shall be accused of exaggeration if I suggest that up to the very last year of school life oral exercises are much more important than written ones. But I will go further and say that they are still the best means of getting good

written results. . . . Again, though this is quite against the tradition in the schools, good writing is simply more carefully considered speech. There is great need to get back into written exercises the easy, natural fluency and simplicity of speech instead of the stilted conventional phrases that a shallow and pretentious system has made customary in the schools.[1]

Although these words were written of schools in England I think that they apply to schools in India also, and certainly the principle which Mr Lamborn is advocating is one which ought to be observed everywhere in the teaching of the mother-tongue. If the period such as Mr Lamborn describes on pages 13 to 17 of his book could be introduced into our Indian schools it would make a very great difference not only to the atmosphere of the school and the interest taken in the work, but also to the quality of work done in the mother-tongue.

We must then take into serious consideration this point, namely that oral work should be carried on systematically right from the first class to the tenth class, if not further. Our pre-occupation with examinations in which oral work in the mother-tongue does not figure, usually causes such work to be neglected as pupils get higher up in the school. But from the point of view of true education and the development of the personality, as well as from the point of view of efficiency in the mother-tongue, this is a big mistake.

When the infants pass, at about seven years of age, into the senior school, they should experience no abrupt change of method. In practice, however, a disastrous break often occurs. On this point Dr Kimmins gave important evidence. He had been struck by the fact that the essays of children below 11 were much more interesting and original than those of older children, and it was his impression that this was the result of the kind of education they received. An inhibition of their powers of self-expression seemed to follow upon the

[1] E. A. Greening Lamborn, *Expression in Speech and Writing* Oxford University Press, pp. 12-13.

children's removal from the infants' department to the upper department where there was no longer the same delightful story-telling or material on which they could cultivate their imagination. They absorbed information which they had not had time to think around, and began to commit things to memory instead. The result was an immediate falling off in their power of self-expression.

. . . To speak well, says another Headmaster, is, for the great majority of men, much more important than writing; oral exercises are therefore more important than written ones. What is more, they are the readiest means to fluency and naturalness in writing; and neglect of them in senior schools is the cause of that stiff, conventional, lifeless style which makes much composition equally tiresome to write and to read.

We wish, therefore, very strongly to insist that training in continuous oral expression should be brought to the front as the most indispensable part of the school course. Without it the junior classes will fail in their object of 'grounding' the children. The senior classes, also, will find that their teaching of English [the mother-tongue] will have but ill-balanced results if all the speaking is done out of school, all the reading and writing in school. Here, in addition to dramatic work, debates and brief 'lectures' by the pupils themselves may be found helpful. Oral work is, we are convinced, the foundation upon which proficiency in the writing of English [the mother-tongue] must be based; more than that, it is a condition of the successful teaching of all that is worth being taught.[1]

In seeking to achieve the aim of our oral work in the primary school, that is, to help our pupils to speak clearly and correctly, to express themselves fluently, to be able to say clearly and exactly what they want to say, and to be able to convey their ideas to others without fuss and self-consciousness, the first step is to get the children to talk to one another, to the teacher and to the class. With numbers there will not be much diffi-

[1] *The Teaching of English in England*, H. M. Stationery Office, pp. 69-71.

culty in this, but it is for those with whom there is difficulty that we have to determine our methods. In the earliest stages probably the best method is for the teacher to have conversation periods. These should be quite informal as far as the class is concerned, though the teacher must have his eye on certain individuals to whom special attention is to be paid. One way of conducting this period is suggested by Miss Wellock in her book *A Modern Infant School.* This is to have a 'news time' each morning. During this time children are encouraged to tell one another about anything interesting that has happened at home, or that they have seen or about which they have heard. They may tell the others about anything they are doing. In fact they may talk about anything which interests them.

In this period children may be encouraged to bring to school things in which they are interested, things which they have made or found, about which they wish to ask questions or talk, and on which conversation may centre. The principle is simply to let the children talk about anything in which they are interested. The teacher at this stage should not worry about correctness or any formal language work. He will of course be noting points which have to be dealt with. He will gradually, trusting to suggestion and imitation, informally make improvements, but he will be more concerned with avoiding all danger of self-consciousness, and will even allow language to be colloquial or slangy as long as it is what really expresses the thought of the child and conveys genuine feeling. Force, life and naturalness are the matters to which attention should be given.

This oral work may be correlated with the craftwork and handwork which is being done. The children will be more than willing to talk about what they are doing, and if they are working in groups, they should be trained to discuss among themselves what they are going to do and how they are going

to do it. Members of different groups can describe to the class what they are doing. The pupils can make models of things connected with their ordinary life at home; of a house, a fireplace, pots and pans, of the animals at home or that they see every day. These things may form the centre of oral work. The teacher may go further and collect or make up short poems or couplets about these everyday things. These can be recited or sung. The teacher may be able to collect nursery rhymes or other songs or little poems which are familiar to the children in their homes, and they can be sung or recited.

Most children are fond of singing and singing should form a regular part of oral work in the primary classes. There are many songs well known to the children and teachers may put poems to well-known tunes.

Children are fond of dramatizing their home experiences in play. They play at house or cooking or at other things they see in their homes. When they get a holiday they play at school. The teacher can use such games very advantageously for oral work, and in them can introduce some of the familiar poems and songs. Nursery rhymes could be used a great deal more in the teaching of the mother-tongue in India in those languages where they are to be found. In some, of course, there are very few in existence. Some of these little poems may also lend themselves to dramatization.

Games of different kinds are of the greatest value in oral work, especially in the primary classes, although they may be used also in higher classes. Suggestions for games and for 'play way' exercises will be found in Chapter X.

Stories are always fascinating for young and old, and the teacher will never go far wrong in using the story. Even a small child can tell something of the story he has heard and can be encouraged to tell one of his own. With all the small ones this is nothing elaborate, perhaps only two or three sen-

BF14.12.11

tences at first. But very soon they will be able to do more than this. The child can reproduce stories read by him in his or any other book or told to the class by the teacher. He can tell stories that he has heard at home. Later he will be able to make up stories for himself.

In helping children to learn to make up stories of their own the teacher may use several devices. He may first of all tell a story, and then, when he has got near the end he may stop and get different members of the class to finish the story in their own way. At first this may be made very simple but it can gradually be made more difficult, with more and more left for the child to supply. Or the teacher may write up on the board the beginning and the ending of a story and get the children to supply the middle. This also can be graded in difficulty. Or the teacher may give the ending of a story and get the children to supply a beginning. This is a more difficult exercise. Pictures can also be used to suggest stories. A series of pictures without words is a good device for starting children on making up stories.

An interesting game that can be played is the sentence game. The teacher starts off a story giving the first sentence. Then each member of the class takes it in turn to add one more sentence. The resultant story may be very amusing, and may be very strange, but the class will certainly get plenty of enjoyment out of it. The story can go on till a natural ending is reached, or until the teacher wishes to finish it off.

There is another type of story exercise where the outline of the story is given and the children have to fill it out. This can be very easy where the outline is very full, but it may also be made more difficult until the outline becomes merely a list of words. The children are simply given a list of words and are asked to make up the story suggested to them as they read through the list and think about them. This, incidentally, is a device sometimes adopted by writers when in search of ideas.

From the first class to the tenth class, to go no further, the story is at once the most interesting and the most useful form of oral work. Here again, from the very beginning, the teacher must try to keep things as natural and as informal as possible. Even if a child is telling a story to the class there is no need for the inevitable formula: '*Main áp ko ek kaháni sunáungá. Ummed hai ki áp gaur se sunengé.*' He does not start like that if he is going to tell a story to a playmate, out of school: he starts right into the middle of it. And so he should do in school. The teacher should never let the child lose his natural force and vividness, life and interest, in the swamp of form and formality.

Pictures can be used very advantageously for oral work. Questions may be asked about the pictures or the teacher can make up a story about the picture and the people in it for the small children, and gradually train them little by little to say something themselves about the picture. Later they may be asked to describe pictures rather more fully, and then to tell the stories suggested by pictures. This latter stage will not be reached until towards the end of the primary school course, and then in a very elementary way. In the middle and high departments, however, this can become quite an art, and a very interesting exercise. Pictures, like the story, can be used from the first class to the tenth class, though naturally they will vary in type. For small children they should be clear, bold and simple. The objects or the people in the picture must be easily seen and it should be easy to understand what they are, and what they are doing. They should not be too crowded. As the children get older, in the fourth and fifth classes, while pictures should still be clear and bold, there should be plenty of action suggested. Pictures should be of things which the children know and which appeal to them. Older pupils in the middle department will be interested in pictures which bring before them a wider life than their own.

They will take more interest in the picture which suggests a story. This is also true of the pupil in the high department.

Gradually the work done in the conversation time will develop, until, by the time we reach the fifth class, it is quite possible for pupils to give little speeches on any subject of interest to them. A beginning can be made with what Mr Caldwell Cook calls 'Littleman Lectures'.[1] These speeches again will start in a very informal way but gradually they can become more formal. Children can be asked to prepare a short talk on some subject in which they are interested. There should be no restriction of subject. A student chairman can be appointed for the period when the talk is to be given, and after the speech the rest of the class should be free to ask questions, and to criticize in any legitimate way. There may be a general discussion on the subject. The speaker should be encouraged to illustrate his talk, if he wishes, with drawings, models, maps, or in any way that may occur to him. He may get some members of the class to read references out of books for him if he wishes to. Naturally such talks in the fifth class will not be very elaborate, but they can develop into really valuable contributions from the point of view of knowledge alone, as the pupils get higher up in the school. It is essential that the whole thing be done in the spirit of the play way. The teacher becomes one of the audience. The pupils conduct the whole thing themselves and decide for themselves what the procedure shall be and how the meeting shall be carried on. Of course if there is a system of self-government in vogue in the school there will be much less difficulty in introducing such a plan because the pupils will be accustomed to managing things for themselves.

The teacher will not interrupt the meeting while it is going on, but may make notes of mistakes in subject-matter, lang-

[1] H. Caldwell Cook, *The Play Way*, Heinemann.

uage and expression to which he may wish to refer later on. Any such defects in oral work, however, should be taken up incidentally when they are dealt with, without reference to the speech. The teacher must not give pupils the idea that they are on trial when they are speaking. On questions of subject-matter the teacher, as any other member of the class, may make inquiries, in the morning, at the end of the speech. At first there will probably be more than one talk in a period until the pupils get accustomed to discussing what has been said. The time taken will depend a good deal on the subject. If at all possible in the organization of the school, discussion should not be stopped because the end of the period has come. If the class is really interested then the teacher should let them go on.

Sometimes, in the same way, we can have reviews of books. A pupil has read a book which appeals to him, and he says that he would like to tell the class about it. So the book forms the subject of his speech. Or a number of pupils can be asked to come prepared to review a book each for the class. The one who is reviewing the book does his best to explain why he likes or does not like the book in question. He will say whether he recommends it or not and why. He may read extracts from it. He must be prepared to answer questions about it. This sort of thing cannot be done in the lowest classes, but could be started in an elementary way from the fourth class. The teacher should begin such work by simply getting a pupil to tell either the story of the book, or one or two stories from it.

Improvization gives excellent practice in oral work. By improvization I mean that the pupils read or hear a story, and there and then, without any preparation or practice, dramatize the story. The number of characters needed is decided and parts are allotted. Then the actors and actresses start right off into the play and make up their speeches and actions as

they go along. Now this, as I have said, is excellent practice, but if any teacher says to his fifth or sixth class after they have read a story: 'Now set to work and dramatize this', and hopes for a fluent exhibition, he will probably be bitterly disappointed. It is not a thing that can be done just like that. As in the case of most other things it must be approached gradually, and the teacher must not expect too much at first. But I have seen a group of boys and girls aged nine or ten get straight up after reading a story and act a playlet that, if one had not known it to be impromptu, one would have been sure was prepared. This was, of course, a group that was accustomed to doing this sort of work. It does not take long to get children into the way of improvizing.

Such work can be started at least in the second class, in a very elementary way. It will start with a very short story with very few characters who have very little to say. From that it can gradually and slowly develop. But if it is systematically done, by the time the pupils have got into the middle classes, they will be able to present, impromptu, really good playlets.

After a story or incident has been dramatized in this way by one group in a class, another group which has been watching may do the same thing and make what they think are improvements until the class is satisfied that they have got the best way of doing it and the best speeches. Then, if the teacher wishes to do so, he may have the playlet written out.

In this matter of improvization the teacher does not need to mind if there are hitches and pauses or if one actor has to suggest to others what they should do or say. It is not a public performance and it does not matter. The great importance of the work is that by means of it we get spontaneous, not artificial, expression. We get what the child wants to say and not what the teacher wants. We get what the child thinks the situation demands. The character which the child has

assumed for the time being is in a certain situation and so the child finds the words and actions for which the situation calls.

There is another form of oral work which is very valuable but which can be used with older pupils only. This is the panel discussion. A panel discussion is a discussion held by a group in public. The group assembles, sitting in a semi-circle in front of the audience, and has a leader just like an ordinary discussion group. The subject has been previously decided on and different members come prepared to speak on some aspect of the subject. The proceedings are informal just as in a discussion group. Members can ask questions, can speak as often as they like (speeches are limited to a short time), may ask for information on different points and do not have to tie themselves down to one particular point of view. When the group has finished, or after a certain time, the discussion is thrown open to members of the audience.

This is much to be preferred to the debate. While the debate may have some value from the point of view of speech-making and of teaching pupils to think quickly, logically and clearly, the moral disadvantages that are inherent in it make it of doubtful value from the point of view of the development of the personality of the pupil. Debating tends to develop insincerity and a showy cleverness, unless one never speaks except on the side in which one believes. Even then the effect of debating is to make one close one's eyes to what is good and right on the other side. In no subject is all the right on one side, but when we debate, if we are to be effective, we have to concentrate on the bad points and defects in our opponents' side. This is not the way to arrive at truth, and the debate is therefore educationally a bad thing. From the panel discussion we get all the benefits of the debate without its defects. In the panel discussion all the members are engaged in the search for truth, and are pooling their knowledge and experience. The result is therefore good.

To sum up, then, we have these methods of oral work:

1. Talks and conversations.
2. Reciting rhymes and singing.
3. Telling stories.
4. Using pictures.
5. Games, and acting plays.
6. Play way exercises.
7. Improvization.
8. Speech-making.
9. Panel discussions.

SPEECH-TRAINING

In teaching correct speech, as we would expect, the influence of the home and of those round the child in his pre-school days is of the greatest importance. Usually when the teacher finds that a child's pronunciation or articulation are bad and his speech slovenly, he will be able to trace the faults back to the parents or to others in the home whom the child is constantly hearing. However, the teacher has in the first place to make sure that he is not adding to the unfortunate influences militating against good speech on the part of the child. The first step, therefore, in training the child so that his speech may be good and clear, is for the teacher to be sure that his own speech is good, his own pronunciation is correct, his own articulation is not faulty, and that there is nothing slovenly or careless about his own talking and speech. Young children learn by imitation more quickly than by any other way, so the teacher must be careful to set his pupils something to imitate which will lead them into right paths.

'Among the children that reach the speech clinic at hospital the majority are members of large families or of abnormally rapidly increasing families, and almost without exception the speech of the mother is indistinct and difficult to understand.'[1]

[1] Article in *The New Era*, July 1938, 'Delayed Speech in Children', by St John Ramsey.

There are two lessons here, even though this statement was made about those who had serious speech difficulty. The principles involved apply to our work in school. The first is that the child learns speaking especially through imitation. When his model is blurred and difficult to follow he gives up the struggle to follow and imitates the blurred and indistinct speech which he hears. This may be all unconscious on the child's part, but the result is faulty speech. Secondly, the fact of these serious difficulties occurring in large families means that they occur where the mother has not had time to give individual attention, or as much individual attention as is necessary, to each child. Hence the child suffers. The second principle therefore is that we should give individual attention in school.

Corrective work, which should of course be done in the first class, and continued if necessary in the second class, should, as far as possible, be done casually; that is, casually as far as the child is concerned. It will not be casual on the teacher's part. But the child who articulates badly should not be singled out in front of his class for special attention. The emotional factors in this case will only be strengthened. The teacher should just naturally take the opportunity, when conversation is going on, of making corrections as though it were an ordinary matter and not some special exercise. He may also, in the case of a nervous or emotional child, make the whole class do a little corrective work in pronunciation and articulation so that the one child is not singled out. It will do no one any harm.

All the work and games which are suggested in connexion with oral work offer opportunities for speech-training. The informal talks with the teacher, the news period, the telling of stories, the reciting of poems and nursery rhymes, singing, all these will naturally be used by the teacher. But they must be used, as I have said, casually, as far as the child is con-

cerned. During such oral work, words are constantly mispronounced and grammatical mistakes are made. But the teacher should not pull the child up at such times, nor make him repeat correctly what has been said wrongly. The teacher should simply supply the correct version, at the same time making a note of certain mistakes which keep coming up. These can then be treated in the special periods for speech-training. In short, when oral work is going on, the teacher will depend chiefly on suggestion and imitation.

There will be certain times, however, when speech mistakes can be dealt with directly. In Urdu certain sounds are very much alike, and it is sometimes difficult for children whose sense of hearing is not acute to distinguish them. The only way to deal with this is for the teacher to show, as well as possible, where the tongue is to be placed to make the sound of certain letters, such as t and ṭ, d and ḍ. This does not need a knowledge of phonetics, though naturally a knowledge of phonetics is a very great help in all such work. But the teacher can find for himself, from his own speech, where tongue and lips are when he makes certain sounds. He can then explain these positions to the children. He can draw pictures of the position of the lips and tongue, and make plans of the inside of the mouth in order to make clear what he is trying to teach. If he can get such pictures and charts well done they can be put up on the wall. Often a great deal of help in formal speech-training can be obtained from nursery rhymes or little poems, especially from those where the same sound is repeated again and again. There is scope for some useful work here. We need collections of little poems in every Indian language made for use in speech-training. But whether using poems or nursery rhymes or not, the teacher will have to give practice with sentences or couplets which bring in the sounds which he is trying to teach.

In tackling this work the teacher will start from the out-

standing defects which he notices. He will not try to correct everything at once. It is sufficient, for example, to start with the long vowels, and then proceed to other sounds. Each teacher will have to be guided by the needs of his particular class. Interest can be added to this work by making a game of it, such as using the sounds made by animals and getting the children to pretend they are different animals in turn. Other sounds such as a motor horn, an engine whistle, and so on, can be imitated in the same way.

Vitally connected with this work of speech-training is the physical work of the school. The physical condition of the child often has something to do with speech defects, and breathing exercises are essential. For little ones these may be in the form of games such as pretending to blow a feather or, if feathers are available, actually blowing them, or pretending to smell a flower or blow up a balloon. With older ones such exercises will be more formal and systematic.

The teacher may have to deal with some children who are really defective. Although such children should really be dealt with by an expert, in India, especially in village schools where experts are not available, the teacher must do his best. There are a number of things he can do.

A very common form of defectiveness in speech is stuttering. Sometimes pupils seem unable to make ordinary simple sounds. Sometimes the voice seems peculiar and articulation is thick.

In all such cases the first thing to be done is to have the child medically examined. Often the trouble is due to something which can be cured or removed, such as diseased tonsils or adenoids. The teacher should be careful to see to it that, as far as possible, the child learns the right ways of biting and chewing food and learns to care for the nose and teeth, and that he develops the correct habits of nose-blowing and of good breathing. Speech is executed by the co-ordinating

and functioning of the organs of respiration, vocalization and articulation. It is especially important that attention be paid to the first of these, and that is something the teacher can do.

Bad speech is often the result of bad hearing. A medical inspection will determine whether the hearing of a child is defective or not. Often bad speech is the result of poor power of co-ordination of the muscles. This is often not a local matter but is true of the whole body. Training in muscular co-ordination through physical exercises and games will be a real help with speech difficulties.

Stuttering and inability to speak properly, however, may be due to psychological causes rather than to physical ones. Stuttering is often caused by fear. The stutter is really a habit which perpetuates the short, tense breathing of a frightened person. When this is the case the teacher can do something by eliminating all causes of fear in school, but cannot do much without the co-operation of the parents. The trouble will have originated, in all probability, in the home, and must be mainly dealt with there. But the teacher should make things as easy as possible in school.

In dealing then with speech difficulties and with speech-training, the following things should always be kept in mind.

1. The teacher should set a good 'speech' example. His speech should be free from sharpness and irritation, and should not be too quick.

2. He should avoid creating any self-consciousness in those whom he is trying to help.

3. He should strive to get the co-operation of the home in keeping the child free from nervous strain, over-fatigue and over-stimulation of any sort.

4. The teacher should do his best to prevent the child suffering in class in any way because of his difficulties. He should try to find a compensatory activity in which the child can shine, such as handwork of some sort, or written work or

drawing. That is, the teacher must try to find a medium of self-expression by means of which the child can do justice to himself, and which will prevent the feeling of inferiority getting a hold.

5. The child who has speech difficulties should be given as many chances as possible for oral work where he is not prominent. For example, the teacher may do some individual work with him. The child may be given chances to read or recite in a small group. Above all he should get every encouragement in his efforts to overcome his defects, and should never be rebuked in any way for them, nor should anyone on any account be allowed to laugh at him. The atmosphere of school should be made as easy as possible for him so that he may gain confidence and courage.

The following are formal exercises that may be used in ordinary speech-training in the first and second classes:

1. Tongue twisters. The children can be given practice with sentences bringing in letters of the same sound such as :

Sust Sosan shīshī lekar shahr men sotī hai.

The teacher will be able to make up such sentences for himself.

2. Pictures may be shown in which are objects whose names start with the letter with which it is wished to give practice. The children should say the names of the objects they see.

3. Breathing exercises for a few minutes once or twice a day.

4. Exercises for loosening the tongue may be given. The children may practise moving the tip of the tongue up and down and making such sounds as:

le le le le   li li li li   la la la la

5. Listening practice may be given, where the children listen to the sounds the teacher makes and try to identify them

and then repeat them. At first the sounds of letters may be made separately and then the letters may be used in words.

6. The teacher gives sentences which are to be completed with words bringing in the sounds which are to be practised.

7. Little poems or couplets are learnt off by heart, the teacher of course selecting or making his couplet to bring in certain sounds repeated a number of times. The following are examples[1] of the type of poem that is very useful for this work.

Uṭho beṭá ánkhen kholo
Bistar chhoṛo lo munh dho lo
Itná soná thík nahin hai
Waqt ká khoná thik nahin hai
Ḍug ḍug ḍug ḍug kartá áyá
Bandar wálá bandar láyá
Hath men ik motá sá ḍanḍá
Ḍanḍe men ek lál sá jhanḍa
Kandhe par mailá sá jholá
Píchhe bandar bholá bholá

[1] *Bachchon ka Tohfa,* Part I, by Mohd. Shafi-ud-Din Nayyar. (These books, Parts I & II, contain some excellent poems for small children.)

III

READING AND THE READER

Teaching Reading

'The first steps in reading should be regarded by the children as a game, and the game will be all the more attractive if they are given from the first some idea of the pleasure which reading is likely to bring them. This idea soon comes to children who have been accustomed to listen with enjoyment to the reading of stories by their teachers or who have constantly found the meaning of a picture interpreted at once for them by their elders from the mysterious symbols beneath it.'[1]

In deciding what method of teaching reading we are going to use it is most important to consider whether our method will be interesting or not. In other words our approach must always be psychological, taking into account the make-up of the child, rather than logical, taking into account the make-up of the subject. It is this consideration which should help us to decide between the various conflicting methods.

We need a method which will result in the child being interested in what he is doing. It is not difficult to find something in which every child in class one is interested. It is a very unusual child who is not interested in stories and in games. This then gives us our clue as to our method. We must try somehow to use the child's liking for stories and his liking for games.

It is very important that an interest in reading should be created before we embark on the actual teaching of the mechanics of the subject. There are numbers of ways in which this may be done. If the project method is being used it will

[1] *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers*, Board of Education, London, pp. 76-7.

not be difficult to create such an interest. It will probably be more difficult to keep pace with the desire of the children to learn to read. Children are interested in pictures, and if pictures are hung round the room with either single words or sentences underneath them, the child will find that the person who can read these words or sentences gets more enjoyment from the picture. He will then want to be able to read them too. Sometimes notices can be put up in the room saying: 'Please keep this door shut', or 'Please leave this door open', 'Please wipe your feet', and so on. If a child does not do as the notice says, then he is called to it and it is read to him.

If the class is going to do anything special or going to play a game, a notice about this may be put up, and the children will soon realize the benefit a knowledge of how to read would be to them.

'One teacher wished to give the children a party on her birthday. She cut out from coloured poster paper shapes representing jellies and cakes. She pasted the pictures on a sheet of paper, and underneath printed:

> Tomorrow is my birthday.
> I shall have a party.
> Will you come?

The children guessed from the picture that the notice was something about a party, but they wanted to know exactly what the words said. They were very much excited about the party, and when a boy who was absent that morning returned to school in the afternoon, Dorothy led him up to the notice and carefully explained it to him.'[1]

There are many such ways in which a child's interest in reading can be aroused. He knows that if he can read he will

[1] M. J. Wellock, *A Modern Infant School*, University of London Press, pp. 81-2.

be able to understand the news that is put up on the board every morning. He will know that he will not miss a lot of the things that he misses because he cannot read. He knows that he will be able to tap an inexhaustible supply of stories.

It is this that justifies what is called the story method of teaching reading. This is really an elaboration of the sentence method. The sentences all form part of a story, and so the extra interest of a story is brought in to help the work. There is a good deal of controversy about the respective merits of the story and the phonetic methods. But from the psychological standpoint the balance swings in favour of the sentence or story method. The sentence is the unit of thought, and when it is part of a story, and the child starts straight in to read a story, a psychological advantage that cannot be lightly discarded is gained. It is true that in Urdu there are not the disadvantages in the phonetic method that there are in English. Urdu has this great advantage over English that no symbol has more than one sound, and that therefore when the child has learned the sound the particular letter represents, he is on sure ground. But even so, because of the advantage of interest, I think there is no doubt that the sentence-story method is the better. After a beginning has been made, then recognition of words can come, and finally, recognition of letters and training in making the sounds that they stand for, so that the child may be able to read the new word. That is, instead of the process being sound represented by the letter (never, of course, the name of the letter), then the word and then the sentence, the process is reversed and becomes the first sentence, then the word, and then the sound represented by the letter. As I have said this is not logical, but we must approach the matter from the point of view of the child.

'Furthermore this way of introducing reading material accords with the results of recent researches into the visual perception of young children. In the early years, children

naturally see objects and shapes, whether these are things or words, as single wholes. They are not easily able to discriminate the detailed parts. 'Man' and 'men', for example, look the same to the very young children; and children of five or six years more readily see the likeness than the difference. Only the more intelligent or the more advanced child can see the minute difference between these words, or such words as 'big' and 'dig' or 'cat' and 'sat'. The word is a general whole to them, and only gradually do they come to the minute distinctions between words having a similar form. For this reason, we make reading more difficult for them if we give them, as in the past we commonly have done, lists of words or stories made up of small words which are very much alike in shape and differ only in small details. The first steps in learning to read are very much easier if the sentences or stories provided consist of words radically different in general shape and length. 'The cat sat on the mat' presents the maximum of difficulty for a beginner; 'Mary has a doll called Jemina' is far easier to appreciate.

'Reading material, therefore, that is naturally interesting to the child, because it is connected with things he wants to learn about or to write about in his everyday life, and thus naturally consists of words of varying shape and length, is also more suitable for him on the grounds of his natural mode of perceiving visual shapes; whereas artificially constructed sentences of words of similar shape and size are not only lifeless and boring—they are also much harder to read.'[1]

One way in which reading by the sentence or story method may be begun is as follows. The teacher takes something in which the children are interested. This may be any object in the room or in the school or anything belonging to any of the children. The teacher suggests that they make a book about this thing. If the children are interested in it they will be quite keen to do so. The teacher then asks them what they want to put in the book. He thus gets sentences from the children. He will write the first two or three sentences on

[1] Frances Roe, *The Beginning of Reading in the Infant School*, University of London Institute of Education, pp. 5-6.

a big piece of brown paper leaving a space at the top for a picture. As well as this wall chart the teacher will also prepare three or four books of smaller size and write the sentences in these books too. The number of books required will depend on the size of the class. These books can also be illustrated either by the teacher or by older pupils from higher classes. Each day the sentences given by the children are written on charts and in the books. The teacher has to see that the sentences have a good deal of repetition. Probably they will have this in any case if they are written down just as the children give them. The books do not need to be very long; four or five pages are sufficient. The children then read from the charts or from the books, and there is no doubt about their interest. When they are ready to go on, they can make another book about some other object.

The objection may be raised that this is a very haphazard way of doing things, and that by such a method it is not possible to follow any graded vocabulary list, and that what the children learn will not correspond to any set reader. This may all be true and yet it is no argument against the method. If this sort of thing is kept up for the first year the children will be able to tackle any reader that they are supposed to be able to read at the end of the year. The big advantage of the method is that the children become enthusiastic about reading. To meet the objection that they can read nothing but the sentences they have put in their books is the fact that after some time the teacher will go on to word recognition and to phonetics. To provide other books children of higher classes may be asked to prepare similar little booklets using, in the main, the words that the junior children have been using, but with variations and some additions. This must be done of course under the supervision of the teacher. But in this way a number of extra books can be made available. These extra booklets will also be illustrated. Gradually a number of these

will be collected and will always be available. The vocabulary used by the children from year to year will not vary a great deal. There should be a variety of booklets for them to read, and then the pitfall of the children knowing only one book, parrot fashion, is avoided. Children learn to read by reading, and the more books we can place at their disposal the better, even in the first class, especially towards the end of the year.

A good deal of the controversy about the sentence method and the phonetic method is due to a misunderstanding of the sentence method in its entirety. It does not mean that the child learns sentences off by heart, and is then unable to read individual words, and unable to make any attempt to read new words when he meets them. It must be admitted that in some schools in India where the sentence method is used, owing to the faulty procedure of the teacher, this is the result. But that is the fault, not of the method, but of the teacher who has not carried out the method to its conclusion. It is perhaps the fault also of the protagonists of the method in not emphasizing sufficiently the essential place that phonetic procedure eventually has in the method. Defects are often found because the teacher does not go from the sentence to the recognition of words, and from the recognition of words to the sounds of letters. The method must be used complete. If this is done there will be no question about the results.

It is often said that when children learn to read by the sentence method, their spelling is weak. This may be so, though I suspect that if it is so, it is because the method has not been followed out to its completion, and that the child has not been taken to the final stage. If, however, it is found that spelling does suffer, the teacher will have to watch this and give special attention to the teaching of spelling. In England, as a matter of fact, it has not been found that the use of the sentence method weakens spelling, but it must be admitted that the peculiar eccentricities of the English

language do not give a phonetic method any advantage such as it would have in Urdu.

The procedure when using the sentence-story method is to make the sentence the unit. The child learns to recognize the sentence and to read it. Once the story is chosen (this is in a case where children do not suggest their own story as described below) charts may be made with pictures on them and a few sentences on each chart. The sentences are also written on slips of cardboard and each child has a set of these separate sentences. Numerous games can be played where the children match sentences with those on the chart, arrange their sentences in proper order, pick out certain ones and so on.

Quick progress is made in this way, and children soon learn to read a story. The next step is to recognize separate words and this can also be done by play way methods. Then follows the teaching of the separate letters and the sounds they represent, and also the combinations according to the position in the word. The letters which enter into combination have to be taught in all forms. While this is being done the children can be going on with another story.

This method has been dealt with in detail for Urdu in the book *Teachers' Guide*[1] by E. J. Smith and Labhu Mall where will be found detailed instructions for teaching reading according to the story method, and a description of apparatus required for the play way methods used.

The Reader and Reading : Primary Classes

It is neither wise nor possible to lay down any hard and fast rule or method according to which the teacher should deal with the reader. The method he uses will vary with the particular object he has in view. If the class is engaged on a project and is seeking for information which may be obtained

[1] Available in English and Urdu from Munshi Gulab Singh & Sons, Lahore.

from the reader, either regarding subject matter or forms of language, the teacher will use one method. If he wishes to use the reader for a game he will use another. If he wishes to use it for training in speech and reading aloud, he will use still another method. There are, however, some principles which should always be kept in mind and we will consider one or two ways in which the reader may be dealt intensively.

1. Pupils should not be set to read material that is too difficult for them. It is far better to err on the side of easiness, especially in the lower primary classes. The teacher should be very careful to see that the reader or the lesson can be read with ease by the great majority of the class. This applies both to words and to meaning.

2. With the lower classes and often also with the upper classes in the primary school, oral work should precede the use of the reader. If the teacher proposes to take a lesson from the reader, it is a good plan to have a talk with the class about the subject of the lesson before it is read. If there is a picture with the lesson, it should be discussed and described. If there are new words and new idioms and usages in the lesson, these may be explained and practised, and, if necessary, drilled. Then the class will be ready to go ahead. Pupils should always understand the meaning of what they have to read before they are called on to read it aloud.

3. Silent reading by the members of the class should precede reading aloud. The pupils should read over a paragraph to themselves before attempting to read it aloud. They may, while doing so, ask the pronunciation and meaning of any words that they do not know.

4. After silent reading is finished the paragraph should be read aloud by the teacher at least once, and twice if necessary, before any pupils are called on to read it. The pupils will then be in a much better position to read it well when they try. Reading in unison should be used very, very sparingly, and can well be dispensed with altogether.

5. The teacher should always find out by questioning, or in some other way, whether the pupils have grasped the meaning of what they have read.

In the primary school and especially in the lower classes a great deal of work should be done by means of the play way. For instance, the children may be given cards with sentences on them in which one word is missing. They have to supply the missing word (either orally or by writing it down) and of course in order to do so they must read the sentences. The class can be divided into teams and such a game made a team competition. Riddles such as suggested in Chapter X, are either written on the blackboard or on cards and the children have to guess the answers. Here, of course, reading practice comes in. Questions may be printed on cards which are flashed before the class and the pupils are required to answer orally the questions which they read on the cards. These may be questions on the lessons in the reader. Pictures of different things which are mentioned in the reader, animals and so on, can be put either in a box or on a table or hung on the wall. The teacher then has cards prepared on which are shown such sentences as: 'Bring me a mango', 'Put the umbrella on the table', 'Put the shoes on your desk'. The teacher shows one of these cards and names one pupil who then has to obey the injunction on the card. Later, names of objects, instead of pictures, can be put on cards.

In the early stages a great deal of this sort of work can be done and it is extremely useful. One difficulty at present is that there are few readers written to be used with this type of work, but these will no doubt be produced, and the ordinary reader can be used with a large number of play way devices.

A suggested plan for taking the reader with the primary school classes would be as follows. First there would be the introductory talk or conversation with what explanations and drill the teacher considered necessary. This would be followed by silent reading of the paragraph or lesson by the pupils. It is better to have silent reading of the whole lesson rather than of just one paragraph. But the difficulty here is

that it is often not possible to finish all stages of the lesson in one period. It is probably better, taking all things into consideration, to take it paragraph by paragraph unless the lesson is very short. Poetry is an exception, however: a poem should be dealt with as a whole.

The teacher may, at the beginning of a new lesson, lead up to it by bringing to the pupils' attention something in their experience with which the subject-matter of the lesson has some connexion. He can use pictures, as we have said, for conversation about the lesson. The children will also be interested if, when they are starting the lesson, they are told of some activity based on the lesson which they can carry out. This may be dramatizing the story, drawing pictures or making clay models of objects mentioned in the lesson.

The children then silently read a paragraph. They are told to mark any words or phrases they do not understand. From the fourth class onwards the children should have dictionaries, and should be trained to use them. In the fourth and fifth classes these dictionaries will be small ones of an elementary type. When the silent reading is finished the teacher takes the paragraph and explains the meanings of difficult words and phrases. He finds out their difficulties, and deals with them. He asks pupils questions to see whether they have grasped the meaning of what they have read, and in the fourth and fifth classes may ask them to give the gist of the paragraph, especially if it is a story. With these two classes also there may be discussions on points of interest. Finally the teacher will read the paragraph aloud. It will depend on the class, but usually the teacher will read the paragraph more than once. Then various pupils should be called on to read the paragraph aloud.

Any particular language matters, usages, idioms, and grammatical constructions, which the teacher wishes to deal with, but which have not been taken before, can be dealt with

at this stage. Then the teacher will proceed to the next paragraph. It is better, as I have said, if possible, to treat the lesson as a whole. Usually it is not possible to do this, and the method has to be modified, but wherever possible it should be done.

The giving of a summary of a paragraph may be difficult, especially at first. But there is no reason why, with a little practice, pupils of the fourth and fifth classes should not be able to give, in a sentence or two, the gist of a paragraph. The teacher will not expect anything elaborate. But there is no reason why pupils in lower classes should not briefly tell a story that they have just read. Again, the elaborateness will vary with the class. Where this is too difficult the teacher can ask questions on the subject-matter of the paragraph. If the lesson is a story and has to be taken paragraph by paragraph, the teacher can ask questions on each paragraph and then have the story retold when the whole thing has been finished.

Written expressional work will, of course, be correlated with the reader, and written exercises will be given which are based on the work that is being done in the reader. This correlation between reader, oral work and written work, should always be carefully arranged.

It is sometimes helpful to children if they are given, before they start to read a paragraph silently, a key question, the object being to focus attention on the central idea in the paragraph. The pupils refer to this question as they read. Finding the answer will enable them to get hold of the main idea of the paragraph. The teacher should see that the question is properly understood before the pupils start reading.

If at the beginning of a period the class has to start with a paragraph in the middle of a story or of a lesson, the teacher should tell briefly the story, or give the gist of the lesson, up to that point. He may get one of the better pupils to do this.

There are some things connected with the physical aspects of reading which should always be attended to.

1. The type in the reading books for the lower classes should be clear and bold. With Urdu, this is a point to which attention should always be paid. Even though in the upper classes pupils read books with small calligraphy, there is no reason why it should not be clear. In the primary classes this is one of the things to which the teacher must pay attention both in readers and in library books. The eyes of children in India have sufficient strain without our adding unnecessarily to their burdens.

2. In the earliest reader one sentence only should be on a line and pictures should not break into the text. They should be at the top or bottom of the page, preferably at the top. Pictures, of course, should be clear and bold.

3. Children often find difficulty in following the lines of print when they start using a reader, and, indeed, later on too. The lines are close enough to distract attention one from the other. The remedy is to let children use slips of paper which can be put under the line which is to be read. Of course, this is only with the first reader, or with children who have particular difficulty.

4. Lessons should be short in the first readers and the books themselves should be short. Nothing is so discouraging to a beginner as to have to go on and on without coming to the end of anything; and we must remember that what seems quite short to us seems very long to our beginner. This applies to library books as well as to readers. It is far better to read four short books than one long one even if the actual reading matter in the four be less than that in the one. The child's interest is greatly increased, he is encouraged, and has a far greater incentive to effort, if he can find himself finishing a book or a lesson quickly and getting on to a new one. Progress is quicker with short lessons and short books.

Now while the regular reader may be used intensively as described, it must not be forgotten that there are two other aims in reading; reading for information and reading for enjoyment.

In reading for enjoyment in the primary classes, indeed in the middle classes as well, the first essential and the most important thing to be remembered is that the books we supply to our pupils should not be difficult. We have only to remember our own disinclination to keep on with a book if we cannot understand many of its words and thoughts. If an adult continues such a book it is because of some ulterior motive, and he forces himself to go through with it. But we do not call this reading for pleasure. No more does the child consider it reading for pleasure if he cannot easily understand what he is reading. Having no ulterior motive he will not go on. If we then try to force him, we run the very grave risk of destroying altogether his desire to read. If, however, the books available for the pupils to read are such that they find they can get an interesting story from them without difficulties of language, then unconsciously the desire to read is inculcated. This is not to say that there should be no new words which the child does not know in the library books. But such words should be infrequent so that they do not interfere with the flow of the child's interest in getting to the end of the story. It goes without saying that in the primary classes books for 'enjoyment reading' should be stories.

The teacher has to know two things. He has to know his children and he has to know his books. He has to know whether a certain book will be too difficult for a certain child or not. He naturally knows the standard of attainment of his pupils. But he does not always know so well the standard of difficulty of the books in his library, and it is very important that he should not give a child a book which is too difficult. There is also the other side to be considered, that he should not give a child a book which is far too easy. It is necessary therefore for a teacher to go through the books in his class library and to know them. When new books come in for

the library they must be carefully graded. A teacher can have his own grading system and when he goes through a book may assign it a place in his own graded list which will later tell him at a glance the standard of difficulty of that particular book.

Books for enjoyment may be read in class in periods for silent reading, or at home. If the reading is done in school, the teacher should continually go round the class, and should take an interest in what his pupils are reading. He should talk about the story, help with difficulties and discuss anything that comes up in the story. Such interest is catching. When the child finds that the teacher is interested, the child, consciously and unconsciously, becomes more interested in his book. In many cases interest in reading for enjoyment does not 'just come'. Home conditions are so often against any such interest. There are no books at home and no interest in such things. The whole out-of-school influence is against it. We have therefore to be prepared to take pains to cultivate the liking for reading.

There are various ways of doing this which will occur to the teacher. One way is by using pictures if they are available. An interesting picture is shown, or if the teacher has the talent he may draw a picture illustrating some interesting scene or event in the book, and the child is told that he can find what is written about the picture in the book he has been given. The teacher may tell a story up to an interesting point and then stop, and tell the child that he will find the rest of the story in the book he has been given. A book may be read in preparation for a play. This always appeals to children. It may be mentioned that it is often a good plan to have a number of copies of the same book in the library so that a number of children are able to read the same book at the same time. This enables the children to discuss it in groups among themselves, and also enables the teacher to talk about

it with a number of children at once and so simplifies his work a good deal.

In connexion with silent reading, from the time it is begun, care should be taken to see that it is silent reading and not whispered or murmured reading. From the very beginning children should be trained not to move their lips or utter the words when they are reading to themselves. Otherwise silent reading is merely reading aloud in a modified form, and the child never learns to read only with his eyes.

There is also reading for information. This children will readily do if they are interested. If they are carrying out a project, there will be no need to persuade them to read books from which they will learn something. They will be only too keen to find out the information they need for completing their project. Here we have the most useful contribution that the project method can make to the teaching of the mother-tongue. But the desire to read for information can be aroused in other ways also. Children will eagerly read books that give information on their hobbies. It is necessary of course to see that they have hobbies, but we are taking it for granted that there will be no dearth of practical work in our schools. If children are engaged in handwork of any sort and find that they can help themselves in their work by getting information about it from books, the great majority of them will not need any persuading to read. We must of course have suitable books on the appropriate subjects.

Children are also interested in books which tell them simply about the things of their everyday life. Probably the interest in reading here is not so automatic, but it is easily aroused. It must be remembered that different types of books appeal to different children. One will be interested in a book which tells him in an elementary way about a motor car. Another will be interested in a book which gives him geogra-

phical facts in a graphic way. Gradually these types of books are becoming available in Indian languages, and when such books are well illustrated they usually attract interest.

In the upper classes of primary schools, if the play way is being used and speeches are given on different topics, children will be keen to read in order to learn more about the subject on which they are going to speak. There are many such ways in which children may learn the usefulness of books and learn to refer to them, not necessarily to read them from cover to cover, but to find certain definite items of information from them. A great deal more of this can naturally be done in the middle and high classes than in the primary school, but even in the primary school, provided the right type of book is made available, a great deal can be done too.

Reading for enjoyment and for information can often be combined. Especially can this be done in connexion with the reading of papers and magazines. In the upper primary classes children ought to begin to read magazines (and papers, if any suitable ones can be obtained) written especially for children. There is a fair amount of material in pamphlet form issued by different departments of Governments for the nation-building services, which can often be read by children of the highest primary class. The habit of reading magazines and such pamphlets can be encouraged when the children are working on projects for the carrying out of which they need information, or when they are working up a speech, or when they are seeking information for any other purpose. With most children's magazines there is no difficulty, as the reading of them is an enjoyment. It is important to start the children reading magazines as soon as possible so that they may develop the habit, and may learn what mines of information and enjoyment there are in many magazines, papers and pamphlets. All this work can be linked up with the creative work of the class in their own magazines.

I have referred to the use of dictionaries. It is also necessary in the two upper classes of the primary school to train children to use the index of a book. This is not a difficult matter. It is mainly practice. Practice comes when the child has to find out something in order to carry out some purpose. A pupil who is in the habit of preparing speeches will soon learn to use an index once he understands the simple technique which must be demonstrated by the teacher. He will soon appreciate the saving of time. He will also get practice when collecting material for an article for the class magazine or for a short essay. When using the reader the teacher can set pupils to find from the index other references to certain subjects that come up in the lesson. This training can be given in other subjects as well as in the mother-tongue. Attention should be paid to it, as although it seems a simple and obvious matter to us it is not so to the child until he understands what has to be done and what the advantages are. Once he does understand, however, an occasional suggestion is all that is necessary. Opportunities for such suggestions will often arise during the course of class work.

The Reader and Reading: Middle and High Classes

We must have a reader or a text. Do we ever pause to ask ourselves why we must have a reader? Perhaps if we did we would understand better what we are trying to do, and perhaps we would also understand why we are so often not doing what we want to do. I fear that too often the reader is simply a very pleasant help to the teacher which enables him to delude himself and his class that he is teaching them their mother-tongue, giving him the subject-matter of his lessons very conveniently, so that he can just pick up the book as he goes to his class and start from where he left off the day before. And then for forty or forty-five minutes the class 'does' the reader. They do it well and thoroughly, and at the end of the term

they pass an examination set on it. And so the mother-tongue is 'done'.

Perhaps this picture is exaggerated. Doubtless there are many classes where the reader is used in a much more intelligent way than has been suggested. But I think it is true to say that even the best of teachers should have a very definite idea of what the reader or text is for, of its uses, and of its limitations. Unless he has this his best efforts are liable to go astray.

In the first place we must remember that the reader or text is a means and not an end. We are often guilty of thinking of it as an end, or at any rate of acting unconsciously as though it were an end. It does not matter at all whether the members of a certain class 'do' a reader or not. All that matters is that the work they do with that reader or that text should help them to gain a proper mastery of their mother-tongue.

It is not at all necessary that a class should finish a reader. Here is one of the evils of examinations. They force the teacher to get through the whole of a reader or text whatever happens because the pupils have to 'know' the whole of it for the examination. But the finishing of the reader in the year or in any other set period of time should not matter at all. The reader is there to help in a much bigger job, and if the pupils are getting all that they can use from half the reader in the year, what harm is there if they do not finish it? The reader or text must never be our master.

Then in the second place we must remember that the reader is not the whole of the work that we are trying to do or even a large part of it. And although we may agree that we make the reader the centre of the work, there is a very wide circle round that centre. We cannot teach all the mother-tongue from any reader or from any text, nor can we ever allow our pupils to rest content with their readers. One of the things that all progressive teachers in India have to strive against is

the tendency to look on the reader as providing the limit of what has to be done. This idea again is the result of the examination system. But examinations or no examinations, if we are really to enable our pupils to get what they should out of the teaching of the mother-tongue, we have to get rid of this textbook-limited horizon, and substitute for it the idea that the reader is but the stepping-off place to much larger and better things. Provided teacher and pupil approach the reader or text in this attitude, it can be most helpful.

As we have seen in dealing with reading in the primary school there are three uses of books in schools. Firstly, pupils read books in order to learn the language and to improve their command of it. Secondly, they read books to gain information. Thirdly, they read books for enjoyment. We are concerned at present with the first object. The reader is for intensive work.

This does not mean to say that the reader should be dry and uninteresting. Too often the mistake is made of thinking that, because the children have to read it, the reader can be filled up with material which would otherwise not claim attention. But this is a serious mistake, and will do a great deal of harm. Readers must be interesting to the children who have to read them. The material in the readers should be related to the lives of the pupils, and should be of such a nature that it will instil in them the desire to read because they find reading interesting.

However, it is out of the province of the individual teacher to say what reader he is going to use. They are usually prescribed. But in these days when things are changing, teachers should raise their voices in favour of interesting readers in primary, middle and high classes, particularly readers which deal with subjects which are closely related to the ordinary lives of the pupils, and which will also help to create an interest in books and so lead to the formation of the reading

habit. In this connexion anthologies are a most useful form of reader. I remember my own experience as a boy when I was introduced to Scott's works through an exciting story from *Ivanhoe* in a reader. Reading that story created a keen desire to read the whole book. This is a common experience. Well chosen selections from standard works can make readers very useful from this point of view, especially if a point is made of keeping the books from which selections are made in the class libraries. Compiling readers in such a way need not detract from their usefulness as tools for intensive work.

In the middle classes the methods of dealing with the reader will be much the same as those suggested for use in the primary classes, but the standard of work will gradually be raised. The same general principles on which work is founded will apply in the middle classes just as in the primary classes. At the same time the intensive work will gradually become more advanced, and a higher standard of expressional work will be required.

Reading aloud will continue along the same lines as suggested for the primary classes. That is, silent reading and general discussion and preparation of the paragraph should precede the reading aloud. The teacher will have to use his discretion but he will have to continue to do a good deal of reading aloud to the class himself as part of the preparation for reading aloud by members of the class.

Just as speeches form a regular part of oral work, so reading aloud from books other than the reader may also be a regular feature of work in the class. Members of the class may wish to read selections from books they have read in which they think the class will be interested. They may wish to read a poem which has appealed to them. When this is done the teacher should insist on careful preparation. The pupils who are to read should make sure that they understand what they are reading, and should get explanations from the teacher

beforehand when they do not. A regular period can be set aside for this work once a month or at some such interval.

The reader will form the basis for language work. It will play its part in training in comprehension, it will form a basis for expression work, will give training in the use of words and phrases, and will be the means of introducing pupils to literature. In the middle classes, that very useful exercise, the summary, may be much more freely used. One of our aims in the teaching of the mother-tongue, as indeed it is in all teaching, is to help our pupils to think clearly, and to express clearly what is in their minds. There is no better exercise for this than the giving of a summary of what has just been read. The summary may vary from a fairly full account of what is in the paragraph under consideration to a sentence giving its main thought, or even a two-word title. When a paragraph has been read silently, explained, and read aloud, a pupil can be asked to summarize it. This exercise can be used for both oral and written work, and will be extensively used in the high classes also.

'With a view to training the children in ease and accuracy in the use of language the teacher should select particular passages. . . . A passage so selected should not be left until the children have extracted from it, as far as they can, all that it has to give. They should understand the meaning and use of each word that it contains, and construct sentences using some of the less familiar words appropriately. They should grasp the significance of each phrase and sentence and perceive how the ideas are related. They should recognize the general idea of the whole and summarize it in their own words. They should apply to it such grammatical knowledge as they possess, analysing it if they can into its component clauses. Finally the whole passage should be read aloud distinctly by some of the pupils with all the rightness of phrasing, pronunciation, and intonation of which they are capable.

It is good oral practice to conjure with the verbal materials of a piece of English (mother-tongue); varying the subject and

object, converting short sentences into long, subordinate into principal, concrete into abstract, active into passive, direct speech into indirect and vice versa; or replacing particular words and phrases by others.'[1]

The following are types of exercises that can be used with the reader in both middle and high classes. They can be either oral or written.

1. The class is asked to make up a conversation which they think would take place between two characters in a story under certain circumstances suggested by the story.

2. The class is asked to tell a story from the point of view of one of the characters in the story. That is, they will tell it as if this particular character were telling it.

3. The class is asked to describe what they think would be the result if some circumstances in the story were changed, if some character had acted differently from the way in which he did act; or if something had interfered with what was going on.

4. The class is asked to choose from a list of adjectives those which suit certain characters in the story or lesson, and to give their reasons.

5. The class is asked to make comparisons between different characters or things in the lesson.

6. A saying or proverb is taken from the lesson and the class is asked to make up a story illustrating it.

7. The members of the class are asked to describe how they would have acted under the circumstances in which the characters in the lesson or story find themselves.

8. The class is asked to write a paragraph describing what the feelings of people or animals in the lesson or story must have been.

9. The class is asked to describe the everyday work of persons or animals mentioned in the lesson.

10. The class is asked to describe how things mentioned in the lesson are made or how they are used.

11. The class is asked to put into simple words some paragraph from the lesson. They may be asked to express the meaning of the paragraph so that a pupil in, say, the fourth class, would be able to understand it.

[1] *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers*, Board of Education, London, pp. 97-98.

12. The class may be given phrases or words synonymous with words or phrases in the lesson and asked to find the synonyms in the lesson. Or they may be given words and phrases which are the opposites of words or phrases in the lesson, and asked to find those opposites.

13. Practice may be given in explaining the difference between words which are sometimes confused such as: *firtrat*, *qudrat*; *sahí*, *sahíh*; *'uzr*, *baháná*.

14. The reader may be used for grammatical exercises of various kinds as opportunity may arese.

These are simply suggestions of some ways in which the reader or text may be used as a basis for intensive work. Other ways will readily occur to the teacher.

Sometimes a paragraph may be dealt with in the following way with higher classes. The paragraph is read by the teacher, who will then in simple words give an idea of the picture that the paragraph has brought into his mind and perhaps some of the feelings it has stirred in him. He will then ask the pupils to read the paragraph over to themselves, watching for the sentences that particularly appeal to them. He may then ask some members of the class to give those sentences that appeal to them and, if they care to do so, they can give their reasons. Care should be taken not to press this in any way. But most will be able to say briefly what it was that appealed to them in the paragraph, or, if nothing appealed to them, to say so. The pupils may then reproduce the scene described in the paragraph or any similar one which has aroused similar feelings in them. In carrying on to this last stage a good deal of care has to be taken, and each teacher, knowing his class, will have to decide for himself how much of this can be done. Some pupils will prefer to write their appreciation and others to do it orally. This work is to be done with more emotional prose, and can be used a great deal with poetry.

Stories should never be neglected right up to the high classes. Any story that comes in the reader should be retold by

pupils and material in the reader may be made the basis of new stories.

It is a good plan to suggest to pupils that they should learn by heart appealing passages in their readers. There is no better way for them to gain a good style and a good command of the language. Of course, we must always remember that the passages must be really good and worth learning. We must also remember that learning by heart should not be forced on children. Those who do not find it difficult will respond to suggestion, and even those who do find it difficult will do so if there is sufficient appeal. In fact, when there is an appeal the learning of the passage is not nearly so difficult. Teachers should realize that it is not only poetry that should be learnt by heart.

In the upper classes of the middle department and in the high classes the method of teaching the reader or text by means of assignments as described in Chapter XI has been found very useful and helpful. This method can be recommended. In this connexion it should be noted that even if one is using assignments, one should never feel bound by the method. While assignments should be mainly used, that is not to say that other methods cannot be usefully employed for some particular portion of the work or in some particular connexion.

In both middle and high classes we have the other two branches of this division of our work, namely reading for enjoyment and reading for information. In reading for enjoyment, as with the primary classes, we have to see that the books in the class libraries are such as are suited to the age and attainments of the pupils. All that has been said about library books and silent reading for the primary classes applies here. The teacher must know his pupils and his books. He must take an interest in their reading. He must do his best to have in the class library books of stories suited to the age of his

ARCHIVES
ACC. No.
1450

pupils, books on things in which they are interested such as their hobbies, books which will put history and geography in a new light. There should be at least a period a week devoted to reading library books, magazines or any other books in which pupils are interested.

We have also the matter of newspaper reading. Obviously our pupils should read the newspapers as they grow older. Equally obviously, in the ordinary newspaper there are many things which it is not advisable for pupils to read. What are we to do? I must confess I do not know the answer. We can do something by choosing the paper which has least objectionable matter in it. But we will not be able to get away from this difficulty, and the only course is to strengthen our pupils to meet such things, as, of course, they have to sooner or later. We need in India a paper of the style of *The Children's Newspaper*.

The matter of magazines is not difficult. There are numbers of good magazines which can be got for middle and high classes from which pupils will get a great deal of good and very little, if any, harm. It is a good plan for one or two teachers to go quickly through magazines as they come in, and mark articles which they think to be good, or to have a small board in the reading room or in the classroom on which short notices can be posted, recommending such and such articles in such and such magazines.

If at all possible there should be a reading room in a school, or at least one room where magazines and papers are kept and where they will be available out of school hours. It is not an easy matter conducting a reading room successfully. Papers and magazines have an unfortunate habit of disappearing or of getting torn up. It is not easy to develop a sense of responsibility in all pupils. But at the same time it makes a big difference to the reading of the mother-tongue in schools if there is a reading room. If the attempt to have one is per-

severed with, things do improve as time goes on. Some of the senior pupils, who can take it in turns to be on duty when the room is open, should be in charge of the room.

One of the things our pupils have to learn is to read discriminatingly. It is not at all difficult to get practice in this. It is usually easy to get accounts of an event from two different papers which give quite different points of view. The two accounts may be posted up side by side and pupils asked to compare them and to note the points of difference. If they know something about the policies of the papers concerned they will also be able to find reasons for the differences. This is an exercise that should be indulged in frequently as there is nothing more necessary in these days of propaganda than that our pupils should have questioning minds, and should learn in school to weigh up things and not to accept blindly all that they read. This exercise can also be carried out in connexion with the teaching of history.

Pupils should be asked every now and then to give the class orally the gist of any article or story they have read in a magazine, and to tell the class why they were impressed with the article or the story, and why they think it worth reading. This is a very good exercise for oral work, and is also a very good way of spreading interest in the periodicals which the school is providing.[1]

I have already suggested the work that a well compiled reader can do in introducing pupils to books and literature which will give them enjoyment. It is very important from this point of view that extracts from great works which are in the readers and texts should be such as will whet the appetite, and it is also important that when such extracts do come in the reader the teacher should be careful not to spoil the interest by dealing with them too intensively. There will be plenty

[1] See also 'Book reviews', p. 91.

of lessons in the reader which do not lead to any particular book, and which can be dealt with intensively. But where the teacher sees that a certain selection is likely to rouse interest and to lead to the book from which the selection has been taken being read for enjoyment, then he should be careful to do nothing which would destroy that interest. Let him encourage such interest by every means in his power. Again he should not be the slave of any particular method. Let him use an entirely different method, when dealing with such selections, from the method he uses when dealing with a lesson intensively. As has been pointed out, copies of books from which selections are taken should be in the class library so that they may be at once available.

Reading for information will also go on in middle and high classes just as in the primary classes and for the same reasons. It must always be remembered that this sort of reading is not the concern of the teacher of the mother-tongue only. But it is his work to see that his pupils gradually learn how to get what they want out of books. As pupils grow up they should become more and more at home with the index of a book, with the table of contents, and with the art of making summaries and making préces. They should be learning the art of skimming. It is a real achievement to be able to skim through a book or a chapter of a book, and get, here and there, the facts that we want without having to read laboriously every word in the book. But it is an art that does not come without definite practice. It is part of the work of the teacher of the mother-tongue with the higher classes to continue the work of helping his pupils to use an index. Pupils should be given exercises which will necessitate their looking up references in the index. They can be asked to find all the references to certain subjects in the book from the index. They may be given the work of indexing a short book or a chapter of a book. This can be started by doing only a page at first.

The teacher should also give his pupils training in the art of skimming. They should be required to find out certain information from a chapter in a given time. The time will be too short for the chapter to be read through carefully. This time can gradually be decreased as the pupils become more proficient. This sort of work should be done only with senior high department pupils.

Just as in the primary classes, reading for information will be encouraged in connexion with every subject by having definite projects which are to be carried out, by the use of play way devices such as speech periods, by the use of the class magazine, by having books and magazines that will help with hobbies. Panel discussions will also create a desire to read for information. If a class news-board or a school news-board is kept and pupils take it in turns to write up interesting items of news, this will ensure newspapers being read. The project of producing a magazine or small booklets for the primary classes, or for one particular class, will also ensure reading for information. Pictures may be hung on the walls with references to books in the library which the pictures illustrate. Numbers of such ways will suggest themselves to the teacher and different methods can be used in different schools to suit different conditions.

The Approach to Literature

When we come to the high classes we have to pay more attention to the classics of literature in the mother-tongue. How are we to teach the masterpieces of Tagore or Hálí? Are we to teach them at all? The answer is that it is one of our essential tasks to develop in our pupils a love for the classics of their mother-tongue. Important as it is for them to speak and write correctly and clearly, to develop their powers of expression in their mother-tongue, it is equally important for them to develop an appreciation of great literature. In fact

this appreciation of, and acquaintance with, great literature will help in carrying out the other aims we have before us.

I have already suggested one method of creating an interest in such books, namely the use of selections from great works in readers and texts. But as we get to the high classes more than this is needed. Pupils have to tackle some of the masterpieces themselves, and the task of the teacher is perhaps not so much that of developing an interest as of refraining from destroying an interest.

How then is the teacher of the high classes to tackle this most difficult part of his work?

Probably the first step should be the same as that taken lower down in the school, namely the reading aloud by the teacher of the passage or poem. Once again this emphasizes the very great importance of teachers training themselves to be good readers. And it may be remarked in passing that we cannot read well unless we can feel well and intensely. The first requisite of the teacher for this work is that he himself should thoroughly appreciate what he is seeking to help his class to appreciate. Otherwise he will put in quite a lot of labour in vain.

In his reading the teacher will try to bring out the essentials of the passages that are being studied. He will make every effort to help his pupils to feel what the author felt, to bring out the differentiation of character, the vividness of portraiture and the vigour of descriptive writing. As a matter of fact, no instructions for this kind of work can be laid down. The teacher must feel for himself what is to be done, and what the material he is dealing with needs from him.

After reading himself he will try to get from his pupils their ideas. His own comments and remarks will be as few as possible. He will guide his pupils to express their own feelings about what has been read, to give their own sincere reactions to what they have heard. When he starts to do this

he will probably find that response is difficult to get. This will depend on the training the pupils have had in lower classes. But, whether response is difficult to obtain or not, the teacher should persevere in his efforts to get his pupils to express sincerely their own thoughts and feelings. It is only as they begin to do this that they are really learning to appreciate what they are reading. So, even though much patience is called for and progress seems slow and sometimes discouraging, still in the long run the reward will be sure.

The questions asked by the teacher should be practically all concerned with the poem or story itself. There should be few notes on allusions, no short biographies of the authors, no burdening of the memory with explanations of words and phrases. The aim of the work is to feel and appreciate, and only such explanations as are absolutely necessary for this should be given and these only incidentally. Above all there should be no homework in connexion with the teaching of appreciation of literature. There are other occasions for doing all these things, but our aim in this particular part of our work is altogether different and we should forget intensive work and its method *and examinations* as completely as possible.

The teacher then, after reading aloud himself, will have a short period of questioning the pupils as to whether they liked the piece, why or why not, what particular parts appealed to them and why. If the teacher feels it necessary there can be a second reading. Then can come a more detailed analysis of style and language with a view to arriving at how the author got his effects, and why he used some particular words and not others. Finally there may be a reading aloud by some members of the class whom the teacher feels have gained an insight into the real meaning and feeling of the piece.

The teacher must always remember that great writers do not grade their writings. That has to be done by the teacher.

There are some masterpieces of literature which appeal to younger pupils and which they can appreciate, to some extent at any rate. There are others which would only bore them. The teacher must decide for himself, guided by his knowledge of his class, what books or poems he is going to take up.

NOTE (A)

ON THE MASTERING OF VOCABULARY

1. Words which are used most frequently should be mastered first.
2. Words should be learnt a few at a time.
3. The way in which words are learnt is by their being met with in different contexts a number of times and by then being used by the pupil in still another context. The reader, if it is a good one, will give the new words in a lesson in several different contexts (sentences). If it does not, the teacher has to supply the defect. The word or phrase must not be left until the pupil can use it in a sentence of his own making. Real mastery is understanding the word and being able to use it.
4. Words must always be understood and dealt with in association. The pupil cannot master a word in isolation. He may be able to give you other words which express its meaning but he will not really understand its meaning unless he has seen it in contexts and can use it in contexts; that is, in sentences. It is from the contexts that he gets the idea of its meaning. In other words the work with new words must be practical, and must be with the unit of thought, the sentence.

NOTE (B)

ON CHOOSING LIBRARY BOOKS

Ask the following questions:

1. Is the language of the book suited to the attainment of the class for which it is meant? The language should be easier than the standard for the class. (Do not take the publisher's grading.)
2. Is the book written in a clear, easy style with short sentences easy to follow?

3. Is the story easy to follow? Except for the high classes there should rarely be chosen for the library stories which are complicated and whose plot is difficult to follow.

4. Are there many allusions and references which make it difficult to follow exactly what the author means?

5. Is the type clear and easy on the eyes?

6. Are the pictures good and clear?

We must always remember that most reading of library books is going to be individual work, and much of it done when the pupil is by himself with no teacher to go to for help. The book should therefore present as few avoidable difficulties as possible.

IV

THE TEACHING OF WRITING

There are four aspects to the use of language, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. The teacher wishing to give his pupils the most effective command of language will have to give thoughtful attention to each of these four aspects, not the least of which is writing. It is much more difficult to learn to write than to learn to read. Great muscular coordination is required for the task, and that has not been developed in the little child just learning to read. Correct writing demands also a close observation of the shape of individual letters, and the ability to imitate the same. In order to write well, the child must be able to read correctly, so instead of one there are two major skills involved, each of which presents its own difficulties.

Certainly the teaching of writing should be correlated to the teaching of reading, and should never be considered as an isolated subject. It should follow the natural desire on the part of pupils, whether children or adults, to put into written symbols the things they have been talking about or reading. Perhaps they will wish first of all to learn to write their own names. As a matter of fact, our own names are just about the most important words we ever write, and in a peculiar way our individual possession. Those of us who have seen our own names in print realize what a source of real pride and satisfaction there is in the experience.

In the first instruction, the basic learning unit is not the individual letter but it is a word, a phrase or a sentence that has real meaning to the child. Through practice in writing meaningful words and simple sentences, children at the first class level will learn to write all of the letters and the numerals.

Attention has to be paid in the teaching of writing, to the child's ability to use the muscles of his arm and hand, and to the particular tool which he will use, be it chalk, crayon, pencil, or even just a stick in the sand. Before he comes to school the child will naturally have developed some coordination between his muscles and his mind. In the first class in school he will do various things, such as putting blocks into place, lifting things, sorting things, building with blocks or mud, modelling of fruits, animals, or household articles in clay, all of which will help him in a general way. Thus indirectly he is preparing himself for the more delicate operation of writing. More definite work of muscle control and coordination than this is needed, however. But this work should not be begun until a certain amount of control of the muscles has been established. Every child cannot learn to write at the same age, although with our regimented class system it is sometimes difficult to make allowances for individual differences.

The first step is drawing. The child is allowed freedom to experiment for himself with chalk or crayon on a blackboard or a big sheet of paper, and is left more or less to his own devices. Practically all children will be only too glad to do anything that is suggested in the way of pictures and drawing. There are few children who, when presented with a piece of chalk and placed in front of a blackboard, will not proceed to exercise their arm muscles. Some of this work may have been done before the child comes to school. Children can do it from the age of three years. But in the majority of the homes from which our children come there will have been little opportunity for this sort of thing. The first class-room therefore ought to have plenty of blackboards, low down, so that the children can stand or sit in front of them and use chalk to their hearts' content.

The next step is to tackle actual words. Letters may be made of some substance that children can easily feel, such as

soft velvet cloth or sand-paper. These can be mounted on cardboard and the children can go over the letters with their fingers. Letters may be cut fairly deeply into the earth and the children can go over them first with their fingers and later with a stick. The teacher may write words on the board or on the ground, and the children may go over the light outline with chalk or a stick. A good deal of practice needs to be given, to accustom the children to the shapes of letters. Such writing on the blackboard or in the sand should be the first writing for every child. The length of time for such instruction varies from a few weeks to the first half of the school year. The teacher will have the group make the transition to paper or to slates when their performance in board writing indicates that they are ready to undertake further refinement of the skill.

Writing upon paper or slates for the first time should be with a large pencil or with chalk. The first writing must be very large, for which the child will use large arm movements. Later, as the child gradually acquires skill, the size will be reduced, and the type of hand movement that is adapted to writing on paper will be developed. But the teacher must take care to see that this development takes place slowly because of the intricate muscular skill that is required.

Since the children learn to write by writing meaningful units, the letters should be taught as the need for them appears. The practice period should be short and so organized that few difficulties are encountered at one time. When letters are learned, diagnostic and remedial work will aid in maintaining desired standards. Samples of writing kept over a period of time and records of individual progress will show concrete evidences of growth and stimulate efforts for further improvement.

Usually when children find that they can write they will want to copy anything they come across in the way of words.

This, of course, should be encouraged, even though their efforts may be crude and difficult to decipher. But we should take advantage of this pleasure in writing. The teacher can use pictures with names attached, and the children can copy the picture and write the name under it or on the opposite page. They may have little books for this purpose. Lines should be drawn for them to write on. These books will gradually show more and more involved work. The same method can be used in the second and third classes. As the children progress, couplets or short poems may be written in large letters and hung up on the wall, and children may transcribe these couplets or poems into their books. Nursery rhymes, or poems they hear in their homes, would be useful for this purpose. In higher classes children may each have their own poetry book in which they write the verses and couplets they like, and in which they also attempt to illustrate them.

As this work continues, the teacher will have to give continual attention to the elementary mechanics of writing to make certain that they are adequately mastered by the children. Matters such as the equal size of letters, consistency in the slant of the down strokes, and care in the fine formation of circles, hooks etc. are important in writing that is not only legible but also pleasing to the eye. It will probably be necessary on occasion to show the close relation that exists between certain letters, as for instance the Hindi letters.

०, व, ब, फ—प, फ, स—ग, म, भ, झ—ट, ठ—र, ख, स

Practice will need to be given to help children attain perfection in their correct construction. It is a good plan to draw permanent lines on the slates of the young children. These can be drawn with a nail, and should be one inch apart for the first class, and one half inch for the second.

The teacher must always remember that he must set a good example, for the child will inevitably copy his writing. This tendency to imitate can be used not only with the finished model, but also with the actual process of forming the letters. If the teacher writes in front of the class on the board or slate, the pupils will imitate the movements of the teacher and the way he forms his letters, and not simply the finished picture of the word or sentence placed in front of them. For this reason it is better for the teacher to write the model himself than for the children to have copybooks with model sentences to be copied. The copybooks can be used, but whenever possible the teacher should himself write the model sentence so that the child may watch him as he does it. The force of suggestion with its resultant imitation is strong with small children, and so, if the teacher wants good writing in his class he must be very careful with his own.

A good way to secure improvement in writing is to get the children to grade their own writing. The teacher may have several different kinds of writing, say five or six. One specimen will be very good and one will be very bad, and the others will be at various stages between them. The teacher can decide for himself how many specimens or grades he wishes to have. Ideally, of course, there should be standardized specimens of this sort[1] but until this has been done, the teacher can do it for himself. It may be rough and ready but it will help him a great deal.

Every now and then the teacher gets the class to write something. He tells them their writing is going to be graded and that they have to write their best. Then, when they have finished, he brings out his scale of specimens of writing which he will have graded A, B, etc. or 1, 2, etc. and gets each child to say to which specimen his own writing is nearest. The

[1] See the appendix for an example and directions for use of a writing scale in Hindi.

teacher then confirms this or suggests another if he thinks the child's judgment is wrong, and the child gets his grade. A list of these grades is kept and after a fortnight or so another grading may be done. Such a writing scale should be kept hanging in a prominent place in the classroom, so that any child may at any time take his work up to it and grade it according to the specimens presented. The teacher can greatly encourage the child by giving commendation whenever the quality of writing improves.

A device such as this will give the children an incentive. They learn to criticize their own work, to be conscious of its poor qualities. They can get special help where needed. A similar scheme can be used to great advantage in the middle and higher classes. Here, when writing is done for grading purposes there should also be a time limit, so that grading represents both speed and quality. Attention should be paid to speed in ordinary writing work from the fourth class onwards, provided that the foundation laid has been good. Emphasis should not be placed on speed too soon.

Attention must be paid to posture and the implements of writing. In most primary schools the posture adopted is to have the slate or *takhti* supported on one knee while the other knee rests on the ground. This is probably as good a posture as can be found when desks are not used. I think it would be better for pupils and for the writing if the children had small desks. But as this is impossible in the great majority of schools, teachers should see that the traditional posture is adopted from the very beginning. When pupils go up the school and come to classes where desks are used, posture has again to be considered. Generally speaking we should let a child write in the position which he finds to be comfortable. But there are certain things which should be observed. The child should sit well back in the middle of the seat, bending slightly forward from the hips. The elbows should be near

the edge of the desk with the paper sloped to suit the child. In the lower classes slates and slate pencils should be used. The habit of bringing in the use of *takhties* and ink very early is of doubtful value, and makes the teaching of cleanliness very difficult. Ink should not be used till children are big enough to manipulate it properly. When they begin to use ink and the reed pen, the latter should be properly made, and the teacher has to pay attention to this. When writing on paper is begun, it should be done first with pencil, and not with pen and ink.

A summary of principles to be observed in the achievement of good habits of writing will be found useful. These principles are taken from an article entitled 'How to Teach Handwriting' by W. J. McKee and J. Manry, which appeared in the Moga Journal for Teachers in October, 1941 :—

1. Begin the teaching of writing only when there is a felt need on the part of the pupil for it.

2. Begin with whole words which the pupil needs and desires to learn.

3. These words should be introduced in order of difficulty—

   (a) Easy forms.
   (b) Similar forms.
   (c) Difficult forms.

4. Train the eyes to follow the outline of letters or words or phrases. Give plenty of drill and practice in visualizing.

5. Begin with large and well spaced letters, gradually reducing the size.

6. Material with which to write should be graded too. First fingers on the ground, then chalk on the blackboard, then slate pencils on the slate, then soft pencil on paper and finally pen and ink.

7. Always pay attention to correct habits of posture and pen holding in writing.

8. Writing period should be short.
9. The speed of writing should be gradually increased.
10. Give proper care to individual differences in children.
11. Practice in the writing period should be correlated with all the required writing work of the class.
12. Make use of children's instincts and provide interesting revision in each class of letters and combinations.

Writing Faults

Observe the more common faults as exemplified in the models given on the next page.

Model No. 1. Observe that some letters slant to the right and some to the left. By extending the vertical lines of the letters in this specimen you will see that there is no uniformity to the slant.

No. 2. The height of the letters is not the same. Some of the letters touch an extra horizontal line drawn below, and some reach barely half way to it.

No. 3. Some of the letters are squeezed into a narrow space, and some are quite broad. If the letters were of more uniform width this would be a very good specimen of writing. The cramped letters in the word 'Hindustan' are especially noticeable.

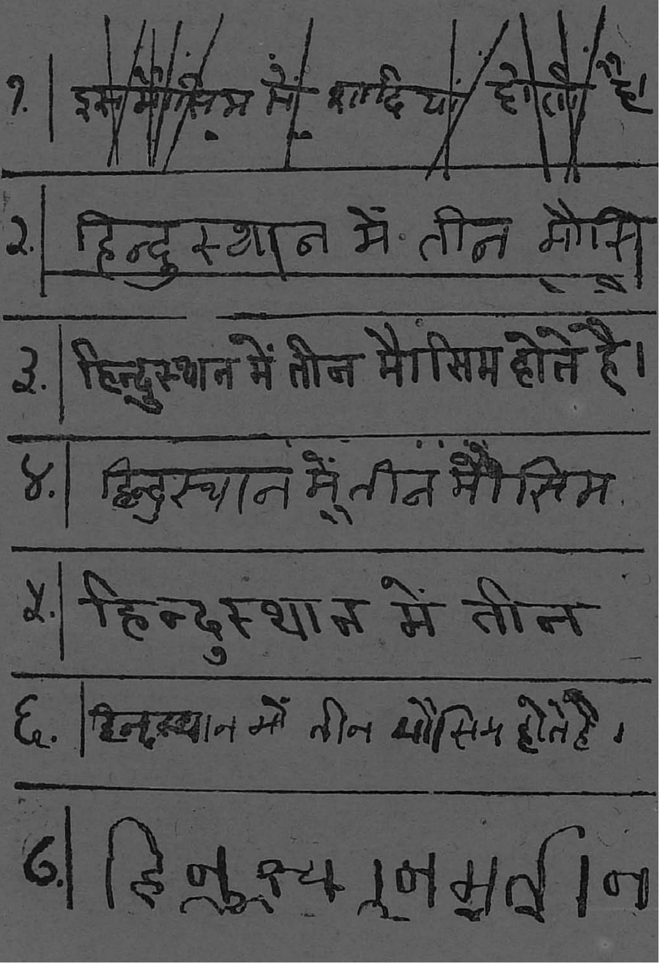
No. 4. The writer does not know how to make the individual letters properly. He needs to learn their correct construction and to practise it.

No. 5. In this specimen the upper line joining the letters of the words together is repeatedly broken. This denotes a faulty habit of writing, in which the line is drawn separately for each letter, and it interferes greatly with both speed and beauty.

No. 6. Observe how thick the lines of some of the letters are, and how thin others are. It may have been caused by a poor pen. The reason for such poor work should be investigated and proper correction made.

No. 7. The writer writes each letter separately without much sense of writing a whole word. Probably his reading

is faulty, and he does not recognize words and letters well enough to know what is required in writing. This is unintelligent copying rather than real writing.



V

WRITTEN WORK

THE FOLLOWING are the principles on which the teacher should base his work.

1. His aim is to teach his pupils to write their mother-tongue simply, straightforwardly and correctly. He will train his pupils to avoid the habit of using unnecessary words and to learn to say what they want simply and clearly in as few words as possible. There is a bad habit, which many of us have, of setting children to write so many lines or paragraphs or pages, on a subject. The result is often to teach the child to pad and fill out with words merely for the sake of making up so much space.

2. The teacher should aim at helping the child gradually to master an increasing vocabulary, and to use that vocabulary easily and readily. The words the child uses are his tools. Just as a carpenter learns to use his tools properly and can make things with them cleanly and quickly, and use them to produce the well-made table or chair, so the teacher from primary to high classes must be helping the child to master his tools so that he can use them easily and clearly to express his meaning. If he is being educated properly the child will have ideas; but he will have difficulty in finding words and phrases to express them clearly and accurately to others. One of the teacher's tasks is to help the child to do this.

3. The teacher must be on the watch for talent in language and must always be ready to do all he can to encourage such talent even though he may not always discover genius. He will quite often find those capable, with proper help and encouragement, of first class work. We cannot start this discovering and encouraging too early in the school life of a child.

From the time a child first begins to make words into sentences on paper, the teacher must always be on the look-out for keenness and ability in the use of language.

He should also aim at developing the imagination of his pupils and at giving them ample opportunities for exercising their imaginations. The atmosphere in which the mother-tongue is taught should always be one which will encourage the free expression of the imaginative powers of the child.

4. Oral work should precede written work in the early stages and should always play a considerable part in the preparation for written work. As a matter of fact, often the best way to teach children to write, is to encourage them to write as they speak.[1] There is a naturalness and spontaneity about speaking that is lost when it comes to written work, simply because it seems to be an artificial thing. An artificial vocabulary and style are used. One has only to read a letter written as a school exercise to see that this is so. Children, as a rule, are not taught in school to write letters as though they were holding a conversation with a person. There is too often a marked difference between the way in which a child will describe to his friends some interesting happening and the way in which he writes an account of it as a school exercise. The teacher must therefore seek to break down this barrier between the natural expression of the child and the putting of his thoughts on paper. Great emphasis should always be placed on oral work, and pupils should be helped to write as they speak.

From this it follows that the teacher should help his pupils to write in their natural style; that is, that what they write should be their own, from their first attempts. They should not be trained to imitate style but to be themselves. This applies more to work that is done in the middle and high classes,

[1] See Chapter II, p. 11.

but the habit of being natural must be inculcated right from the beginning. Imitation often simply means imitating tricks of manipulation of words and sentences without understanding. Style cannot be separated from personality. At all costs our pupils should be taught to grow up to be themselves and to express themselves in their own way. They should, of course, be introduced to models of good writing which will have an influence on them of which they will be unconscious. But they should not be trained to imitate consciously tricks of style of their teacher or of anyone else. As they grow up and read more and more widely they will develop a style that is their own and not second-hand.

Special care should be taken to save pupils from all insincerity. They should be trained to express their real thoughts and feelings. Nothing should be done, that will cause a pupil to write something which he thinks is what is wanted rather than his own ideas. We should aim at teaching pupils to observe carefully and to describe exactly what they see and feel, to say and write what they themselves think, and not what they suppose they ought to think, to give their own impressions and feelings on the subjects about which they write.

5. In written work, we must be sure that the pupil has something to say and that he has ideas. Now there are certain subjects in which the child is not interested and about which, therefore, he finds it difficult to write. On the other hand there are numerous matters in which he is keenly interested and about which he is anxious to write. If we want our work to be successful we must try to find these subjects and let him write about them. The teacher must try to discover what the child wants to say. The ordinary child is interested in doing things and in telling people what he has done When he comes to writing he will, therefore, primarily be interested in writing about what he has done and experienced. As a matter of fact this is true of everybody, adults as well as

children. The child will not be particularly interested in describing a cow or a horse, though he will be interested in telling how he learnt to milk a cow.

The child's objects in writing, though he will quite likely not be conscious of them, are either to write statements or reports for other people's information, or to express on paper his feelings and personal experiences for the benefit of others. We should always remember that the child, just as the adult, likes to speak and write to an audience. He will be vitally interested in describing his experience *to* someone where the same thing will become drudgery if it is simply an exercise in school in which no one is particularly interested. Where he is simply putting down more or less accurate information about something with which he knows the teacher is perfectly familiar, there is not the incentive of an audience. Even the teacher can be a real audience if the child knows he is telling the teacher something new.

Unless we link our work up with real life and experience, and make the description of what has happened a real thing, then it becomes artificial and loses all interest. Nor should we delude ourselves into thinking that the child does not realize this. He feels it and begins to look on school as a place apart from real life. A teacher was conducting a lesson on a cat. There were the usual questions about the anatomy of the cat, the number of legs it had, where its whiskers were, and so on. The class was accustomed to this sort of thing and took it with ordinary boredom. But there was a new boy in the class. His surprised reaction at length was: 'Why, teacher, haven't you ever seen a cat?' He was treating the situation as real, whereas the whole thing was unreal. We must therefore, from the time our pupils first begin to write, make sure that what they do is real to them, that they are writing for a real audience, and that they are doing something which is related to life and therefore has an intrinsic interest for them.

It follows from this that quite often everybody in the class will not be writing about the same thing. What interests one will not interest another, and therefore, if the teacher is to achieve the object we have been considering, there will have to be a good deal of individual work. This will have the added advantage that the child will feel that the teacher is really interested in him as an individual, and, also very important, that the teacher is really interested in what he is writing. He will really be telling something the teacher does not know. Thus will the teacher be able to supply his pupils with a real audience. The class, of course, can form another audience; parents can be another; friends another; pupils of another class can be one more. But there will have to be a certain amount of freedom of choice of subject if we are to let our pupils write about what really interests them, and if we are to develop in them an enthusiasm for writing.

6. Written work in the mother-tongue should also aim at developing the power of logical thinking. Pupils should be trained to express their thoughts in logical sequence and to use language in such a way as to aid thought and not to confuse it. In the early stages this can best be done through the use of the story. Later, summary and prècis writing may be used.

7. A foundation for written work must be a training in observation. Children must be trained to observe carefully and accurately what they see and experience. This, of course, is a training that will go on all through their school life, but it must start right from the beginning. If children are encouraged to observe and to record the results of their observation, it will often be found that they are keener observers than adults, especially in matters in which they are interested. Oral work will give opportunities for emphasis on good observation.

8. It is perhaps not necessary to emphasize the fact that if the best results are to come from our work, and this applies to

all work and not simply to written work, there must be a friendly atmosphere in the classroom. The children should be sitting comfortably. There should be no tension, no writing against time or space, no struggling against fear. The children should be relaxed and free as if playing a game. If the child is writing for the teacher as his audience, then he will be writing for a friendly audience.

PRACTICAL WORK: PRIMARY CLASSES

We now come to the different types of written work. We will consider first, work that can be done with the primary classes.

An interesting way to begin written work is to get the children to make word books. These books can be made by the children themselves. On the top half of each page the children can paste a picture which they have cut out of some magazine or old book, or they can draw their own pictures. Underneath they write a list of the names of the different objects in the picture. These words will be written up on the board by the teacher so that this is really an exercise in transcription. A title can be given to the book such as 'A Book of Flowers', 'A Book of Birds', 'A Book of Houses and Gardens', 'A Book of Motors'. These books will be quite short at first but can gradually increase in length. The length will depend on the number of pictures available or on the interest and the skill of the children in drawing. These word books will then give the child lists of words which he will be able to use when he wants to write something in which any of these subjects occur. That is, they will form a sort of self-made dictionary. Another plan for slightly more advanced work is to have pictures which show some action. Then there can be two lists of words, naming words and action words. In this case it may be necessary to have the picture on half a page, followed

by a page and a half for words. This will depend on how much there is in the picture.

In the second and third classes the written work will be mainly transcription. Easy forms of the exercises suggested may be used. Dictation should be used very sparingly, and with a knowledge of what dictation really is. When it is used it should be for instructional purposes as far as possible and rarely for testing. That is, the children should be told the passage or sentences which are to be dictated and should study them carefully. They will then study them knowing that they are going to write them from dictation. The practice of the teacher choosing at random a passage or sentences from the book and dictating them without any special preparation being done, should be avoided. Spelling should be tested orally as there is then less chance of bad habits being formed.[1]

Suggested Exercises

1. Filling in blanks. This is an exercise that can be graded according to the class and is therefore useful right through to the high classes. In the primary classes it will be in a simple form. Usually, and certainly in the lower classes, a list from which the words to be filled in are to be chosen, should be given.

2. Answers to questions on what has been read. This may be given from the second class on. This again is an exercise that will vary in difficulty according to the class. In the second class the questions will be such that writing the answers will be little more than transcription.

3. Questions given on a picture. The words to be used in the answers may be given or not. (With the lower classes they should be.) Sentences about the picture may be given in which words are to be filled in. This again can vary in difficulty.

[1] See Chapter VII, p. 105.

4. A sentence with one word left out may be shown with three or four words in brackets from which the child has to choose the right one. For example:

The sky is————. (young; blue; light)

5. The same type of exercise may be used with different parts of speech, requiring children to choose the right adjective, adverb, verb, conjunction, or preposition.

6. Two lists may be given, one of the beginnings of sentences and the other of endings. The children are required to find the ending that goes with each beginning and to write out the complete sentence. This is also an exercise that may be graded according to the class. The same type of exercise may be used with questions and answers, there being a list of each and the children being required to find the answer which goes with each question and to write them out together. These will be on something read or on a picture.

7. Writing sentences using words or phrases from the reader. This may be begun in a very simple form from the second class.

8. Sentences are given and the children are required to change the nouns and verbs in them into the plural.

9. The words of a sentence are written in the wrong order and the children are asked to arrange them in the right order and write out the sentence. This also can vary greatly in difficulty.

10. Sentences are shown and the children are required to write them out using the opposites of underlined words. A list of the opposites may be supplied.

11. A part of a sentence may be written, either subject or predicate, and the children are required to supply the missing part. This should not be done before the fourth class.

12. Answers are given and the children are required to write out the questions to which these might be the answers.

13. Composition. This will start in a very elementary form. It will be nothing more than writing a few simple but connected sentences about personal experience or activity. Oral work should precede the written work.

Such exercises as the following may be given:

(*a*) How, When, Where?

You found a rupee. (The child has to tell
He saw a tiger. how, when and where.)
There was a fire.

(*b*) Description of how to do things.

These things will be connected with the everyday life of the child, as:

Making and lighting a fire
Cooking a chápati
Planting seeds
Making a box.

This can vary infinitely in difficulty and can be made quite as suitable for the tenth class as for the fourth.

(*c*) Describing things which are in everyday use, such as a pen, a book, a football, a pair of scissors, a milestone, or a flower.

(*d*) For the fourth and fifth classes 'If I were' exercises are always interesting. The child has to pretend that he is a railway engine, a letter posted, a motor lorry, a tonga, etc., and has to describe a day in his life.

Another form of this exercise is 'Let's pretend' where the children pretend that they are some animal, such as a cow, a bird, a dog, and describe a day of their life in the first person, or they can pretend that they are some other person such as their teacher, a postman, or a policeman and describe what they would do if they were.

14. Conversations. In the fourth and fifth classes and possibly even in the third class in a very simple form, children can write conversations which may develop into simple play-lets.

Conversations may first be written between the characters in some story that has been read where most of the necessary material is given.

Developing this, more range can be given to the imagination, and the children may be asked to write such conversations as one between a horse and a motor car, a vegetable and a flower, a letter and a telegram, or a *kachcha* brick and a *pukka* one.

This may then develop into the writing of short and very simple playlets where stories are dramatized. If the improvization described under oral work[1] is carried on, then the writing of the playlet will follow the improvization.

15. Letters. These will start in the third class and go on in the fourth and fifth. At first they will naturally be very simple. But whether simple or more advanced, the same principle holds good, namely that letters to friends and relatives should be natural, and that the children should learn to write letters just as if they were speaking to the person. It is much easier to achieve this if the letters written in school are to actual people, and not just an exercise. In the fifth class will come business letters and invitations, which of course are formal and for which the set forms have to be learnt. With letter-writing will go the writing of applications and, from the fourth class, the writing of receipts and money order forms.

16. Stories. This is one of the most important forms of work as well as one of the most interesting, and has an important place in written as well as in oral work.[2] All the suggestions that were made for telling stories orally can be used for written work also. Pupils may be encouraged to make collections of stories heard in their homes and villages. They may write them out, making small booklets of them.

[1] p. 21. [2] See Chapter II, p. 16.

17. Descriptions. In the fifth class an elementary form of descriptive work can be begun. Children may be asked to write descriptions of common scenes and happenings, such as market day in the bazaar, the breaking of the rains, a motor lorry departing, a shop, the post-office, the school assembly.

They may describe themselves without mentioning any names. The efforts are afterwards read out to the class and members of the class try to guess who has been described.

The children can be asked to write descriptions of their friends such as they would give the police if a friend had been lost so that the police might be able to find him.

18. Five-minute essays. In the fifth class it is possible to use 'five-minute essays'. The children are given five minutes to write on any subject they wish. They are simply told to put down the first thing that comes into their heads and then to go on writing about it or what it leads to for five minutes. Obviously this will need a good deal of training. It will not be very successful the first time it is tried, but such unpremeditated, quick writing is often far better and more natural than a more elaborate effort. This can be continued in the middle classes.

Practical Work: Middle and High Classes

1. Essays. As we have seen there is always one principle that should be observed in asking children to write essays or compositions, namely that what they are asked to write about should have some connexion with their lives and should be interesting to them. The whole class need not write on the same subject. The work has to be corrected individually and there is no reason why all the essays should be on the same subject.

It is best for pupils to make an outline. It is not necessary

that they should be slaves of the outline once it is made, but it will serve as a guide and will be especially useful in helping them to develop logical habits of thought. The outline may be just a list of words or may be elaborately developed with heads and sub-heads. When pupils begin to write essays the teacher should insist on full outlines which should be carefully done. Later when they get into the high classes they do not need to make them so full and elaborate. The type of outline made by older pupils will depend a good deal on the subject.

Abstract subjects should be avoided, at any rate up to the eighth class. Such subjects as Honesty, Punctuality and so on, which are such favourites with teachers are not interesting to children, and only tend to make hypocrites of them, because they will write what they think they ought to write, and not what they really feel about the subject. And above all we want them to give expression to their own ideas. Subjects, if given by the teacher, should be concrete and of really vital interest to the child.

Useful types of subjects for Essays

(i) Some of the same types of subjects as were suggested for the upper primary classes are also useful in the middle classes, such as 'If I were' stories and 'Let's pretend' subjects.

(ii) Descriptions of journeys to nearby places, recent happenings in school or the neighbourhood.

(iii) Obituary notices of any person or animal known to the writer. These are accounts of the person or animals as they would be written if he were dead.

(iv) Letters to an editor. Pupils are asked to write a letter to the editor of a paper or of their school magazine about some local problem or about some contemporary event; about the local town committee and their faults; about the bad roads; about the dog nuisance; about things in

school which could be improved. Pupils should be given the opportunity to read correspondence columns in some newspapers before they are given this exercise.

(v) Essays can be set on famous characters in history, about people in other lands or about their customs, thus correlating history and geography with the mother-tongue. Anniversaries of different kinds provide opportunities for this sort of essay which gives a chance for some individual research in a small way.

(vi) Book reviews. We have already suggested these in oral work but they are just as useful in written work. It is a type of work that can be done from the sixth class to M.A. This is a very good exercise for developing the critical faculty, and for encouraging pupils to say exactly what they think. This sort of work may be started with the review of a single chapter in a book.

(vii) The personal magazine. This is a special exercise book which is divided into sections. Each pupil has his own book and divides it into sections as he wishes. There may be sections for stories, anecdotes, news, sports items, descriptions, jokes and so on. Sometimes pupils may be given opportunities to write something for their magazines. What they write can be corrected and then copied into the magazines. They can also illustrate them. The class magazine can be a development from these personal magazines and also provides a medium for expression work in writing.

(viii) Other subjects:—

Critical accounts of characters in books read.

Telling the story of a picture in the words of one of the people in it.

Describing a game in detail to one who does not know how to play it. This is useful in training in clear exposition.

Describing to a person who does not know the way, how to get to a certain place.

Inventing conversations.

2. DRAMATICS.[1] There can be a good deal of written work in connexion with preparing a play. Either individual pupils or groups can be given the work of writing out a playlet suggested by a story or by an incident in history or by something which has happened in the neighbourhood. It has been suggested that if improvization is done the playlet can be written out after the oral work is finished. Numbers of the things suggested in the chapter 'Using the Play Way' can be used in connexion with written work.

3. LETTER-WRITING. This has been started in the primary classes and the principles which were suggested in that connexion will still be valid for middle and high classes. There should be naturalness and reality in the work. Whereever possible actual letters should be sent to relatives or friends. This is not difficult to arrange in boarding schools but may be difficult in day schools. But every attempt should be made to bring reality into letter-writing.

Business and formal letters of course have to follow the usual forms. Practice can be given in answering actual advertisements taken from newspapers.

4. POETRY WRITING. As suggested in Chapter VII opportunity should be given to those who show a talent, or even a desire, for this sort of work to try their hand at it. This will be regular class work for all pupils, but when certain pupils wish to try to write poetry they should be allowed to do so when others are doing some other form of written work, such as an essay, or when they are writing something for their personal magazines.

5. WRITTEN EXERCISES

(i) *Précis writing or summaries.* This is one of the most valuable exercises it is possible to give. It teaches pupils to

1 See Chapter X.

grasp the salient points of what they read and to express them succinctly. It is also a good exercise to get pupils to write down one sentence which expresses the main thought of a paragraph or to give a title to a paragraph.

Prècis work is not easy. As has been suggested, it should be practised orally and can gradually increase in difficulty. The teacher can vary the difficulty by picking paragraphs which are easy or difficult to summarize.

(ii) *Paraphrasing*. This is also useful sometimes as an exercise for training pupils to express themselves in simple language. They should occasionally be asked to express the meaning of a paragraph in their own words. This should not be used before the eighth class. It is a difficult exercise, and one which should be used sparingly.

(iii) *Drill in the use of words, phrases, and idioms*. There are many different kinds of exercises that can be used for this purpose. Many of those that have been described in the section dealing with primary classes can be used with middle and high classes also. Many of the exercises given in the chapter 'Using the Play Way' can also be used. The difficulty of these exercises can vary with the class in which they are used. Paragraphs can be written bringing in certain words or phrases which are given. Exercises explaining the difference between synonyms and in using them, and exercises in using opposites in sentences, may also be given.

Special attention should be given to paragraph work. Pupils should be taught how to write paragraphs with one main idea in each paragraph, linked with the previous paragraph. Probably the most important thing in connexion with learning how to write a paragraph is that there is one main thought to the paragraph and one only. If this is thoroughly grasped it will go far to help the pupil to secure orderly and progressive arrangement of ideas.

In all written work, it must again be emphasized, we must seek to help the child to be sincere. We must help him to write what he himself really thinks and feels. We should always be encouraging. Help will often be needed, but if the teacher's attitude is discouraging it will not be asked for. But the teacher is there to give help and his attitude should be such that his pupils will always feel free to come to him with their difficulties. Often a child will seem to have no ideas, or cannot summon them. Sometimes, in such cases, if the teacher gives the first sentence, particularly if it is provocative and suggests developments, this will be all the help the child needs. Sometimes a short talk with the child about the subject on which he is going to write will make him realize that he has more ideas than he thought he had. Sometimes the teacher may be able to suggest a library book or an article in a magazine which will help his pupil. In all this work we accomplish most if our attitude is an encouraging one.

Correction Work

Correction work should always be done in a positive way and never so as to discourage the child. If an exercise is full of mistakes, it usually means that insufficient oral or other preparation has been done, or that the exercise in question is too difficult. It may also be the result of carelessness on the part of the pupil, but if it is, it will be quite easy to detect and the pupil can be dealt with accordingly. If, however, the pupil has done his best and made a large number of mistakes, the teacher must pay individual attention to the pupil. It will not be possible to deal with all the mistakes. He must select certain ones and concentrate on those. There are some things which can wait, and will in time be eradicated, provided the child is getting plenty of reading and oral work. At the same time the teacher must see that such mistakes as he concentrates on are understood, and that his pupil understands

how to correct them, and why what he has written is wrong. The pupil should always write out the correct form of a sentence that is wrong. It is convenient to have the written work done on one side of the double page in an exercise book, while the other side is left blank so that corrections can be written opposite the sentence with the mistake in it. If the teacher finds many pupils with a large number of mistakes he has to look to the preparation work that is being done for the written work, or to the difficulty of the exercises he is setting.

In all written work it is of the greatest importance that what the pupil does should be seen by the teacher. The latter will use his discretion as to how much correcting and what sort of correcting he does. The correction work will mostly be an individual matter. Even if the teacher does the actual correcting work at home, or away from the class, he should go over the corrected exercise with each individual pupil. There may, of course, be mistakes which are common to a number of pupils. These may be taken with the class as a whole, but in any case the teacher should go over the work done with each pupil individually. It then becomes a much more friendly affair. The teacher can understand better the reason for the mistakes made, the real difficulties of the pupil, and how to help him. The pupil on the other hand feels that the teacher is taking a personal and friendly interest in him and his work, and is thereby encouraged.

It should always be the aim of the teacher to help his pupils to understand their mistakes for themselves. The help that he gives will be in the nature of helping his pupils to help themselves. Ordinary mistakes in grammar can in most cases be marked by a sign, such as 'G', alongside them; and it should be the custom in such cases for the pupil to find out for himself what is wrong and what the correct version is. If he cannot do so, then the teacher helps. In a great number of cases the pupil can do this for himself. The same pro-

cedure may be adopted with spelling mistakes. In the case of more difficult mistakes, bad style, faulty idiom, l ack of logical sequence in thought, the teacher will have to deal with each case individually and give the help that is required.

Sometimes when classes are larger the correction work becomes a very heavy burden on the teacher. In such cases the teacher must estimate for himself how much written work he can correct comfortably, and give no more. It is far bette r to have a little less written work, and have it corrected, than to give a lot of written work which is not corrected. When written work is given it should be corrected by the teacher. The only exception to this is in the case of imaginative and creative work. This is in a different category and needs a different treatment. It does not call for detailed correction, though it should certainly be read by the teacher.

In the first years in the middle classes a great deal of the written work should be preceded by oral work so as to try to ensure that mistakes will not be as plentiful as they might be otherwise. Special drill in the use of words and phrases and idioms which are to be used may be given orally before the written work is attempted. This will relieve the teacher of some of the work of correcting mistakes in the written work. As a teacher gathers experience, he will know the usual mistakes which continually crop up, and will thus be able to deal with them before they appear or before they become very bad. A teacher of the mother-tongue should keep a special record of common mistakes that recur year after year. He will find that this will help him very greatly in his work.

VI

THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

THIS is a rather controversial part of our subject. On probably no other part of the teaching of a language are there such diverse and strongly held opinions. One lot of enthusiasts will have nothing whatever to do with grammar, and would hurl all grammar books from the windows of the school. Others think that a language cannot be properly studied or known unless all the intricacies of its grammar are thoroughly understood. Others again favour its functional use, though it is not always quite easy to understand exactly what is meant by this. Others favour practical grammar, and create a feeling in favour of themselves and their ideas because we all like to be practical and to do something practical. But the result too often is that the unfortunate work-a-day teacher is left wondering what he is to do, and then, being a practical person, he usually turns to last year's examination paper and teaches his pupils what he thinks will get them through the examination.

With grammar, as with so many other things, we have to realize that it must be our servant and the servant of our pupils, and not the master of them or us. The second thing we must understand is that, as is so often the case, there is some truth in every point of view, even of the most fanatical, and that we have to pick and choose. It is not necessary to commit ourselves to any school of thought. We can take the good and useful which each has to offer and make the best use of it.

This does not perhaps give much direct help to the teacher faced by his classes. But it is important for him ever to keep in mind the main aims that he has in teaching the mother-

tongue. Because it is these aims that will help him to choose his methods wisely, and will enable him to decide whether certain branches of study will really help his children or will only take up their time and energy uselessly and so do more harm than good.

Taking everything into consideration it seems that those who would banish formal grammar teaching from the school are right as far as the primary school is concerned. With children of primary school age, the best way of teaching them to use their mother-tongue correctly and clearly and vividly is not through dissecting it and trying to understand how it is made up, trying to pull it to pieces and put it together again. This sort of thing, which may be interesting and amusing for older children, is far beyond the mental stage of children in the primary school. They will learn their language through suggestion and imitation. They will learn it from those whom they hear speaking it round about them and from the books they read. It is far more important for them to read widely and listen well than to try to learn grammar.

It will be admitted that a good deal of the language that children hear, especially if they come from homes where the parents are uneducated, is not going to suggest the correct usage to them. This is an unfortunate situation, but the remedy is not to teach children grammar. They will perhaps learn grammar, but they will not use it in practice. The only remedy, apart from campaigns for adult education, is for the school to do its best to counteract the suggestive influence of the home by the suggestive influence it exerts through oral and reading work in school.

As the child gradually comes to adopt the speech habits that he finds in school, he is at the same time gradually building up a standard of judgment. This standard is not consciously present in the mind of the child. That is, he does not consciously judge that the last time he heard that word,

the verb ended in 'i' so he must make the verb end in 'i' the next time too. He just does it without thinking, because the habit has been built up in him. He certainly does not say to himself when speaking the words: '*Yih meri kitab hai*, that '*kitab*' is feminine and therefore he must make '*mera*' feminine; that the feminine of '*mera*' is '*meri*' and therefore he will say '*meri kitab*'. This is what the adult too frequently does when learning a foreign language, but school and life would be a painful process if we learnt our mother-tongue in that way.

Usually adults know very little of the formal grammar of their mother-tongue. They simply go by the sound and 'feel' of a sentence to know whether it is correct or not. This carries us a long way, though not all the way. But it is certainly all that we need for the child in the primary school. He should learn to speak, and, as a result, write correctly, entirely through conscious and unconscious imitation. And his standard of judgment as to the correctness of a sentence should be that of the average adult, namely, the sound and 'feel' of the sentence.

I do not mean to imply that this is an infallible guide; but it is sufficient for the primary classes. This means, however, that we have to be very careful to give the child plenty to imitate. Dropping formal grammar does not make any less work for the teacher or the child. It does mean much more interesting and profitable work. There must be plenty of opportunity for reading books of a grade suitable for the age and vocabulary of the child, plenty of guided oral work where mistakes are unobtrusively put right, plenty of oral drill where usage and idiom are taught. In this way a foundation will be laid which no attacks of formal grammar can unsettle.

In the fifth class, towards the end of the year, a beginning may be made with some very simple formal grammar. This will be little more than elementary work on the structure of

the sentence, and the names of some of the more important parts of speech with practice in picking them out.

When pupils get into the middle classes they will be getting to an age when they can begin to understand that there are certain rules according to which they should speak and write. They will gradually be able to understand that different words do different work, and are related to one another in different ways. The time has then come when we may venture on some formal grammar teaching because it will now be of some help.

It is necessary to do some grammar when the child has gained a reasonable command of the language. Words and sentences are his tools and he must understand how they are used. He must know when one tool is used and when another, and such understanding increases his interest in the work that he is doing. Later, the understanding of grammar and its rules helps to develop style and clarity of expression, as, for example, when by learning the right use of connectives he escapes from an endless chain of 'ands'. In the same way a knowledge of the work of the different forms of the verb, especially such forms as the continuatives and intensives that we have in Urdu, helps him to express clearly and accurately what he wants to say.

It is generally agreed nowadays that we should start with the sentence in grammar work since it is the unit of thought. We then proceed to the parts of speech. The method to be used is the inductive method. The pupils should be helped to arrive at rules for themselves, after examining numbers of examples. That is, grammar should be made an interesting work of discovery. Then should follow application and the practice of the rule in question. This matter of the practical application should never be neglected. After all, grammar can be of practical value if we are willing to use it properly.

As the pupil goes up through the middle classes he will become acquainted with various grammatical terms. These

are useful as short cuts, but only such as are really necessary should be learnt. There is no use burdening pupils with terms which are of no practical value. The teacher will have to decide for himself how far he is going to go in this direction. There are certain terms which cannot be dispensed with, such as active and passive, transitive and intransitive, names of tenses, subject, object, predicate, participle, and so on. These must be understood.

There is one very important point which should always be borne in mind when teaching grammar. That is, that what is done should be done thoroughly. A great deal of the dislike that pupils have for grammar lies just here. They do not understand it. They do not understand it because they have not been taught it thoroughly and when we do not understand a subject we begin to dislike it. It is far better to do a small amount of grammar and do it thoroughly than to cover a large field, followed close at hand by a few of the best pupils with the rest straggling far behind. If grammar is taught thoroughly the children will enjoy it, especially if the inductive method is used. Also they will have a firm foundation for advanced work.

The teaching of grammar in Urdu is complicated by the fact that it is necessary to do some work with both Persian and Arabic grammar. This will have to be done when the high classes are reached. It is impossible to avoid this even if one wishes to. Many words and forms cannot be understood without an elementary knowledge of Arabic roots. Many constructions can be explained only by reference to Persian grammar. For those who are learning Persian or Arabic no difficulty is presented; but some knowledge of the grammar involved is necessary for everyone.

By the time pupils get to the high classes some, at any rate, will be able to appreciate the study of grammar simply as a study and the teacher will be able to lay the foundation for

more advanced work which, while of little value from the point of view of the ordinary use of the mother-tongue, may yet be of great value from a cultural point of view. In the high classes as well as in the upper middle classes the assignment method of dealing with grammar and composition as described in Chapter XI is recommended.

VII

THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

LEARNING TO spell is matter of memory. Therefore the more ways in which the word can be impressed on the memory, the more likelihood there is of the correct spelling being remembered. There are three main ways by which we can remember the spelling of words; by sight, by sound, and by muscular action. Thus the best way to learn the spelling of words will be a way which brings in all three or at least two of them. Probably the best means that can be employed is transcription. When a child is transcribing a word he sees the word and gets a picture of it as it looks. He also brings in muscular memory as he writes the word. His fingers are more likely to write the word correctly after having written it correctly once or twice. As he writes he can spell the word over to himself, thus bringing in the sound as well as the sight and the tracing of the word. He can also pronounce the word to himself. Usually, therefore, the most economical way of teaching spelling is by transcription. If the spelling of separate words has to be learnt they should be written on the board and copied down, or should be copied from a book. The child should be encouraged to spell them over to himself in a low voice and to pronounce them as he writes them.

In Urdu or Hindi which are, with some exceptions, phonetic, training in correct pronunciation will help a great deal in helping the child to learn to spell correctly. Where words are spelt as they are sounded, and where there is but one sound for each letter, if a word can be pronounced it can also be spelt after the letters and their corresponding sounds have been learnt. This is not a complete solution of the problem in Urdu as there are some letters which have sounds so very

nearly the same that only experts in Arabic can detect the difference or pronounce the letters differently. Certainly children in primary schools cannot tell the difference between the sounds of such letters as 'te' and 'toe' and 'ze' and 'zal'. But these exceptions apart, a great deal can be done through the teaching of correct pronunciation, and therefore great emphasis should be placed on this in the primary classes. At this stage also the children should get practice at oral spelling, though always with the proviso that the teacher should bear in mind that oral spelling practice should never be the main means of teaching spelling. This should always be transcription.

Little reliance should be placed on dictation as a means of teaching spelling. Dictation cannot help a pupil to learn to spell. It is simply a means of *testing* whether a pupil can hear correctly what is said to him, and, having heard it, whether he can write it down correctly. It is a means of finding out what words the pupil cannot spell, and can therefore minister indirectly to his spelling needs. But the danger is that he will get into bad habits because it gives him the opportunity to write down words wrongly. It should therefore be used very sparingly, especially in the early years. There are other ways of training the pupil's hearing of words which do not have the same danger. If spelling is to be tested it is better to test it orally, as then the pupil does not see his mistake if he spells the word wrongly and does not train his fingers to write it wrongly. If dictation is given it should be given only from passages that have been prepared by the children. It is better, however, to leave dictation alone as much as possible and to use the time for transcription. (Dictation has some value in helping to fix in the memory spelling that has already been learnt.)

'The persistence of dictation exercises is no doubt to be explained by the fact that under the older 'Codes' pupils were

examined in spelling by dictation tests. While dictation may incidentally be a means of testing spelling, it cannot in itself be a means of teaching spelling. The chief use of a dictation lesson is to afford the pupils a training in careful listening and comprehension and in careful writing at a reasonable speed. Passages for dictation should usually be selected not on account of the difficult words that they contain, but because of the interest or merit which they have in themselves and because they may be wanted for use afterwards in class.'[1]

There is, of course, the same danger of learning wrong forms if children are writing something of their own. It is naturally impossible to avoid all pitfalls and impossible to avoid all opportunities of making mistakes, but even here practice in transcribing words which are likely to be used in connexion with the subject about which the children are going to write may be given. In this way they will have the chance of learning the spelling of words which they are likely to use before they use them in writing work.

As a matter of fact the learning of spelling should be closely connected with reading, and with composition work. To approach the matter along this line will be much more profitable and much more efficacious than using lists of words which are not related to any particular context, or than using spelling books. Words learnt in spelling lists may quite easily be misspelt in practical use when writing, simply because they have been learnt in an artificial situation. When the practical situation arises, because of the change, the learning does not carry over. The situation which demands the correct spelling is the situation in connexion with which the correct spelling should be learned. Thus the learning of spelling should be associated firstly with the reading of sentences, and secondly with the writing of sentences.

It should be emphasized how necessary it is to lay a good

[1] *The Primary School*, Board of Education, London, pp. 160-161.

foundation, and therefore how necessary it is to begin this work right from the first class. It is sometimes brought as a criticism of the sentence-story method of teaching reading, as we have seen, that spelling suffers. This is true only if the method is not carried right through. After five or six months the child gets from the sentence to the sounds of the letters, so there is really no reason why in his first year he should not get a sound foundation in pronunciation and spelling. He should quite easily be able to learn the spelling of all the words he reads. It is simply a matter of paying sufficient attention to spelling.

There is the question of drill work in the teaching of spelling. Is it necessary to have special spelling drill? Opinion is divided on the point. Some claim that drill is not necessary, and that spelling is just picked up from reading and transcription. Others maintain that it can never be learnt adequately in this way and that children, especially in the primary classes, must always be given drill. Now we will not get at the truth here unless we remember how individuals vary. While it is true that one person can pick up spelling without any special drill, it is equally true that another cannot and requires drill work. Those whose visual memory is particularly good will pick up spelling as they read and write. It is true that wide readers are also usually good at spelling. Naturally the more one reads the oftener one comes across the pictures of words, and the greater the chance of those pictures being impressed on the memory. But it is still true that for many individuals we have to supplement reading and transcription with drill. This is not to say that we *must* give drill work in spelling to the whole class. It should be given only to those who need it. The teacher will soon be able to pick out those in the class for whom drill work in spelling will be simply a waste of time. While drill work is being given to those who need it, the good spellers can be given silent read-

ing or some other work to do. But we must remember that we can lay down no hard and fast rule on the subject of picking up spelling. It is a thing in which individuals vary a great deal, and we have to plan our work according to the individuals we have in our classes.

Where drill work is given there should probably be not more than half an hour, or one period a week on it, at most. This is apart from the ordinary transcription work. A good deal of drill work can be done by means of play way methods which take away any drudgery there may be and add very greatly to the interest of the work.

Some of these are as follows:

1. The spelling match. The class is divided into two teams and each team is given a word to spell in turn, each member of each team being given his turn. The team which makes fewest mistakes, wins. The words misspelt are written correctly on the board and are afterwards written out three or five times by those who made the mistake. A variation is for each team to have a leader and for the leaders to give words to the opposing team. The whole thing is done orally.

2. The teacher writes a word on the board and lets the class see it for a short time, say five seconds. He then covers the word and the pupils then have to write it down. This may also be played as a team game. Those making mistakes should write the word correctly three or five times at the end of the game.

3. The teacher may write up on the board the letters in a word mixing the letters in any order. The children have to write out the words correctly. Children find this an interesting exercise.

4. A game that can be played in some languages, though difficult in Urdu, is for some of the letters of a word to be left out and asterisks put in the place of the absent letters. The children have to write out the word correctly.

5. A longish word is given and the children are set to write out as many words as they can make out of the letters used in the given word.

6. The children are given one word and are required to change one letter only and so make a new word. They can carry on in this way as far as they can go. For example:

lab dab dal dil hil hal haj

7. The children are given a word and have to make another word of the same length beginning with the last letter in the first word, and then another in the same way and so on making a ladder. For example:

lag
gup
pak
kil
lab
bak, and so on.

8. A game that is interesting for older pupils is as follows. One player starts with any letter. The next player adds another letter, the third adds another and so on. Each player as he adds a letter must have a word in mind. That is, he cannot add any letter at random. He must be carrying on with some word. The player who is forced to add a letter which completes any word after three letters gets a black mark. Thus each player has to add a letter but tries to avoid adding a letter which will make a completed word. Completing a word within the first three letters does not count against a player. At the end of the game the player with the fewest black marks is the winner. If a player thinks that the player before him has added a letter at random without having a word in mind, or has added a letter which makes the spelling of the word wrong, he may challenge that player to say the word that he has in mind. If he has no word or if he is spelling the word wrongly, then he is given a mark. When a word is completed, then the player next in turn starts off again with any letter he may choose, and the next player adds one letter and so on. It is usually found that it is necessary to have a dictionary handy when playing this game. Proper names are not allowed.

There should not be much need for spelling practice in upper classes. But even here it will be found necessary to pay some attention to spelling. When mistakes in spelling are made in written work, they should always be corrected by the pupil, and should be written out three or five times. It is sometimes helpful to write out the word, marking in some special way the part of the word that was wrongly spelt. The part that was wrong may be written in ink of a different colour, or the word may be written in pencil and the part where the mistake was may be written in ink. Or a circle may be drawn round the part where the mistake was. Any device that will draw special attention to the mistake, and the correct version, will impress that correct version on the sight, and will be useful.

It is useful for each pupil in the class to have a little note-book of his own in which he can write down the correct version of any word he has spelled incorrectly in his written work, whether it be in the particular work of the mother-tongue or in any other subject. This book may have separate pages for each letter of the alphabet, and words may be written in under their initial letter as in a dictionary. The pupil will thus gradually, during the year, compile a list of words in which he has made mistakes, and can go through them every now and then. The teacher can also test him on them every now and then.

In lower classes the teacher can make out a list of words commonly misspelt, write them out in big letters and put them up on the wall. Such lists need not be very long and need remain up for only a few weeks. If necessary a new list may then be put up.

Children should be trained to consult their dictionaries or their teacher whenever they are in the slightest doubt about the spelling of a word. In the early stages they should always

consult their teacher if they are not sure, and later they should be trained to use their dictionaries.

Sometimes spelling rules are helpful, but by the time it is possible to teach rules, they will not be very necessary, and if possible they should be avoided. In a language so nearly phonetic as Urdu it is much more important to teach correct pronunciation.

VIII

THE TEACHING OF POETRY

In teaching poetry our main object is not to teach the meaning of individual words or phrases, nor to enable the class to get a story in a pleasant way, nor to give them an exercise in putting ideas that have been expressed in beautiful language into language that, whatever it may be, is certainly not, as a rule, beautiful; but our task is to try to enable our pupils to catch something of what the poet felt and of what he was trying to express. We have to try to teach them to understand and appreciate the poet's love for nature so that they may develop that love themselves. This applies to the simplest poem taught to the lowest class as well as to the more advanced work of senior classes. Our main task as teachers of poetry is to create an atmosphere in which the meaning of the poem can be felt rather than understood intellectually, but none the less understood.

It follows that the reading of poetry is of the greatest importance. If a teacher is to teach poetry well, he must be able to suggest by his reading the meaning of the poem. A teacher cannot give too much attention to his reading of poems. On his success in this will depend his real success in teaching poetry. It follows of course that the teacher must understand the poem himself first. We cannot read well unless we also understand.

The poetry that is taught in school should be related to life. We cannot expect children to feel things that are out of all relation to their ordinary experience. This is especially true with younger children, though it is true with all. They should not get the impression that poetry is something apart or artificially attached to ordinary life. They should look

ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC No.
1450

on poetry as a natural thing that has to do with everyday life, arising out of, and expressing meanings that come from everyday life. If poetry is taught in this spirit, and if poems for teaching to younger children are chosen with this in view, then poetry will remain an integral part of their lives until they die.

It may be objected that the selection of poems is usually done by the writer of the textbook, and that the teacher does not select the poems he has to teach. But although it is true that the teacher cannot select the poems which appear in the textbook, it is possible for him to introduce his class to poems which are not in the book but which will appeal to his pupils. Sometimes the teacher can let the class select the poems they wish to study. The teacher can read or recite several poems to the class and they can choose which ones they wish to study. It is possible with younger children to make use of collections of poems especially written for children[1] or collected from nursery rhymes that they hear in their homes. Later on, folk songs and ballads can be used.

For a teacher to be able to select good poems, however, it is necessary that he should know and read good poetry. Even to select good poems for small children it is necessary for a teacher to be in the habit of reading good poetry. Though the standard of the poetry which he reads may be far higher than that of anything which he is likely to have to teach, it is still necessary for him to be in the habit of reading good poetry if he is to be able to select wisely even the simplest of poems. Good taste, even in the simplest poems, will come only by keeping in the company of good poetry.

Poems for children, even if very simple, should have beauty of thought and beauty of expression. They should have a good rhythm. They should not be sentimental nor should

[1] Such as *Bachchon ka Tohfa*, Parts I & II, by Md. Shafi-ud-Din Nayyar.

they be morbid. With young children special attention should be paid to rhythm. It appeals to practically all children and is the best medium of introduction to poetry. Children love rhythm in movement, music and words. Hence the value of nursery rhymes.

In whatever class poetry is being taught, the first step should be the reading or reciting aloud of the poem by the teacher. This is why it is so important for the teacher to be able to read well. The whole benefit which the class is going to get from the poem will depend on the teacher's reading of the poem. His reading will bring home the meaning of the poem. Of course, as the type of poem varies with the age of the children, so will the amount that the children get from the poem, and so will their powers of understanding, of meaning, and of appreciation. But the principle underlying is the same from the first class to the tenth class. It is by reading aloud or reciting that the teachers can mediate the poem to his class. One reading, of course, is not enough. It must be read, two or three times. The teacher in reading must be careful to read with correct emphasis, and with due regard to metre though avoiding any tendency to a sing-song voice.

In this way the teacher will begin with the poem as a whole, and the class will have a chance to assimilate the effect of the poem as a whole before any attempt is made to break it up. Any good poem is a complete whole and taking it verse by verse ruins it. (That is, speaking of shorter poems. Obviously, long poems cannot be treated in this way, but have to be divided into sections.) Once the poem has been taken as a whole, it is possible to go over it and to explain words and phrases whose meaning is obscure, allusions and figures of speech which are puzzling. The way in which such figures of speech contribute to the expression of the poet's meaning, the value of certain words, such as descriptive adjec-

tives, may also be pointed out. But all this work is subordinate to the main object which is to feel the poem rather than to understand intellectually the individual words in it. The explanation of difficult words and phrases is not the main aim of teaching poetry, though too often it is considered to be so by those who teach it. Writing paraphrases of poetry is probably one of the worst things we can make our children do if we want to teach them to appreciate poetry, and to develop the poetic sense and poetic feeling.

'The poetry lesson should not attempt in any direct manner to increase the vocabulary, or enlarge the reader's stock of general knowledge or his power of expression. It will naturally do this in any case, and difficult words and phrases will be explained, but to have these secondary effects as aims of the lesson is to give the readers the idea that poetry exists for such ulterior purposes and not for itself. The aim (of teaching poetry) is to afford each individual in the class a keen and sincere pleasure in a new experience, and an enlargement of his powers of sympathetic imagination; to enable the poems to stimulate emotions and imagination for which the poem is itself the adequate expression.'[1]

In teaching poetry we come up against the vexed question of learning poetry by heart. It is the experience of some of us that the setting of 'repetition' in school and the forcing of children to learn so many verses off by heart simply results in an aversion to poetry. Pupils are required to learn so many lines simply that they may reproduce them more or less accurately the next day or on some set occasion, such as an Inspector's visit. There are various arguments brought forward to justify this business of making children learn poetry by heart. Children, we are told, absorb the best things in literature. They possess themselves of valuable parts of their national culture. Later on they will remember gratefully

[1] *Teaching Poetry*, Oxford University Press, p. 6.

the lines they now learn with such great drudgery, and will then appreciate the full significance of what they are now learning. But all these desirable things depend on the very important consideration that the children *want* to learn the poems that are set. If they do not want to, then it is very doubtful indeed whether any of the benefits claimed for learning poetry by heart do, in fact, accrue.

Apart from the fact that individuals vary greatly in ability to learn words by heart, and that what one child can do in a few minutes, takes another child half an hour of painful drudgery, it is a fact that the benefits of learning poetry by heart come only when children are allowed to learn what appeals to them, and are not forced to learn by heart what they do not want to. There is no doubt that most children do like to learn poems by heart, and if carefully guided will delight in learning good poems. But there is a world of difference between this procedure, both in method and results, and that which simply requires every child in the class to learn the same set number of lines. We do not all appreciate the same things and neither do children. Children should be given freedom to choose what they wish to learn by heart, and to learn poetry by heart should be a pleasure which they give themselves, and not a drudgery which is imposed on them irrespective of their desires and tastes. And if they do not find it a pleasure, they should not be forced to do it. After all, if certain children find it difficult to learn poems by heart, no great damage is done if they do not do so. But if the poems are presented rightly, most children, if left to themselves, will want to learn poems which appeal to them. This applies right from the first class to the tenth.

While teaching poetry should not be made an excuse for teaching language in a formal way, neither should it be made an excuse for teaching biography, history, or morals. It is true, of course, that with some poems we have to give an

introduction so that our pupils may understand the setting of the poem and the situation with which the poet deals. Poems on historical subjects are of this nature. But this introductory work will naturally be done before the poem itself is tackled, and in any case the history or setting must be subsidiary to the poem and not vice versa. It is also necessary to lead up to some poems, which have to be read in a certain atmosphere. This calls for the skill of the teacher, and is best done by taking first other simpler poems which lead up to the main one, and so prepare the class for what is to come. It is by the atmosphere in which the poem is taught, and which the poem itself makes, that its moral influence will be chiefly felt.

One thing may be said about poetry and small children. It is this: it is just as important that the simple poems that are read to small children, and which they read and learn, should be good poetry as it is that the poems read by pupils in higher classes should be good poetry. This is not to say that they should be anything but simple, but the rhythm should be correct and good, and there should be the poetical touch about even the simplest of poems. The teacher, as I have said, will have to be the judge of these poems.

It is only if we are careful in this matter that, as the child grows up, we will be able to help him to develop good taste in poetry. Taste and appreciation develop from being in good company, and this applies to poetry as well as to other forms of literature.

'The actual reading of poetry to the class may be supplemented by special guidance. You can help the children to understand what the poet is trying to do. You can make them realize a little how he is trying to make a picture of what is in his mind and heart. You can point out that there is a pretty way of saying things and a less pretty way, that some poems sound brave and strong and others gay and dancing and that the poet has taken a good deal of trouble to use the

right words; not necessarily 'grand' words or big and unusual words, but just the right ones. Even little children can be made to realize something of the music and magic of poetry.'[1]

Nowadays numbers of teachers are advocating choral work in the recitation of poems. The poem is recited in unison by the whole class. While in the hands of an expert this can be made very effective, and can be very different from the old 'class' recitation, it requires a good deal of training to be able to 'conduct' the speech choir so that scope may be given to individual interpretation of the poem and yet the result be a really co-operative effort. For this is what choral speech is; the co-operative effort of the class to interpret and make vocal their interpretation of the poem. For most teachers, however, the individual method of recitation is better; though if opportunities for training teachers in conducting choral speech should ever present themselves, they should be seized.

It is impossible in any one lesson, especially in a large class, for more than a few children to recite aloud. The children may read aloud the poem together, and then several may read it or recite it one by one. The teacher, however, must always read or recite the poem himself more than once before any child is allowed to do it. Gesture and action should only be used if they come absolutely naturally and would be used in ordinary conversation. There should be no idea in the child's mind that there must be gestures. It all depends on the poem. Gestures should be absolutely natural. This applies from the first class to the tenth.

There is an exercise to which reference has been made, and which is very commonly given in connexion with the teaching of poetry, and that is paraphrasing. This may be useful in teaching language or in testing whether the pupils have grasped the verbal meaning of the poem. But as far as teaching

[1] *The Practical Infant Teacher*, Vol. IV., edited by P. B. Ballard, New Era Publishing Co., pp. 1124-25.

poetry is concerned it is of no use and is most dangerous. If a pupil feels moved to put down in prose the feelings that have been aroused in him by the poem, well and good. But to set him to ruin what the poet has written, is going to do neither him nor anybody else any good. The whole fact of the matter is that poetry is not an examination subject, and we cannot test appreciation in a formal manner. So if we really wish to teach appreciation and real understanding of this form of art we have to avoid the devices which will reduce it to a formal study.

There should always be opportunity given for creative work in connexion with the teaching of poetry. This may take the form of illustrating by means of pictures the poem that has been read. It may be the writing of a prose passage suggested by the poem. It may, and probably will, take the form of writing verse. This should always be definitely encouraged from the very first time it makes itself evident, and attempts at writing poetry should always receive encouraging treatment from the teacher.[1] He can give a great deal of help in unobtrusively suggesting improvements in diction, in teaching the rules of metre and rhythm, and in making the child feel that he is doing something which is really worth while. Good efforts should see the light of day in the class or school magazine, or on the wall of the room. Small children can be encouraged by being given a very simple line and by being asked to write another line to go with it. In the middle and high classes the *mushā'ara* is an excellent way of encouraging creative work along this line. Another form of creative work in connexion with the teaching of poetry is the dramatization of narrative poems in which verse may occasionally be used. In ordinary dramatic work, senior pupils may be encouraged to bring in verse.

[1] See Chapter IX where Creative Writing is dealt with in more detail.

'Don'ts' in teaching poetry[1]

Don't make poetry work formal or exacting.

Don't impose adult standards of understanding or appreciation.

Don't repress genuine, even if unusual, tastes and preferences.

Don't over-emphasize formal aspects of expression.

Don't carry analysis beyond the degree which contributes to appreciation.

Don't insist on memorization.

'Dos' in teaching poetry[1]

Read poems at any suitable time on any subject which comes up.

Encourage pupils to write rhymes and jingles as well as more formal types.

Encourage the making of collections of poems and the making of booklets which shall be the pupils' own anthologies. These can have illustrations.

Encourage pupils to find or draw pictures to illustrate poems. Dramatize story poems.

Encourage the making of a class book of verse.

[1] See A. I. Gates and J. Y. Ayer, *Work Play Books*, 4th Grade Manual, The Macmillan Co., pp. 55-56.

IX

CREATIVE WRITING

As we have seen, one of our objects when teaching the mother-tongue should be to develop in our pupils the power of creative writing. Normally this is not so much a positive matter as a negative one. By that I mean that our pupils will be willing and anxious enough to produce creative work if we do not restrain them. Help and encouragement they need, to be sure, but most ordinary children have the root of the matter in them, and it is due to the discouragement of the circumstances in which they live that we do not see more results of this power which everyone possesses. This is not to say that every child is a budding Tagore or a future Iqbal, but it is true that most children can, if they get proper treatment, produce something that is really their own creation, and we could have far more Tagores and Iqbals in the land if we took more care to help the development of our pupils' creative powers instead of discouraging and restraining them. It is not true either, that every child will want to exercise his creative powers through the medium of writing and speaking the mother-tongue, but a large percentage of them will do so if given the chance.

What then must we do if this natural power is not to be dammed up, but is to be strengthened and developed?

In the first place we must set ourselves definitely to undertake the work of developing this power and of training our pupils and giving them opportunities to use their creative powers. This is not something which can be accomplished by simply setting the children to do creative work. It calls for hard thinking and hard work on the part of the teacher. This work will start with the first and will go on to the tenth

class as far as the school is concerned, and should go on through the university course. We often find that in the first two or three classes some effort is made to help pupils to exercise their creative powers, but that gradually these efforts fade away as the pupils go up through the school, to become spasmodic and finally disappear altogether when the high classes are reached. Creative work is not tested in the matriculation examination. Perhaps the day is in sight when it will be taken into account even in this, but whether it be or no, we should never forget that the development of this power is one of our main objectives, even though our pupils do have an examination at the end of their school course.

In the second place the teacher must give his pupils freedom. We cannot hope to help our pupils to do creative writing or speaking unless they have freedom. They must have freedom to write about anything they wish. One cannot write creatively to order on a given subject; at least a child cannot. The child must have absolute freedom to write whatever he wishes to write, and in whatever way he wishes. I would go as far as to say that the child should be allowed to write whenever he wants to, and for as long as he wants to, as long as he does not take too much time away from the rest of the subject. He must be free to write exactly what he feels and thinks. There should be informality in the teacher's talks with pupils and in pupils' working together in groups. The teacher must create such an atmosphere that the child never develops any idea of writing or saying what he thinks he is wanted to say. There should be absolute spontaneity. This will altogether depend on the teacher's attitude and is essential. We will never get real creative work from pupils who are suppressed and required to conform to a pattern. There should be little restraint on language. The main thing is for the child to express himself in the language

which he feels best gives his meaning and expresses his feelings. Along with this the teacher will be helping and advising in the matter of correctness and suitability of language, but that will come at a different time and not directly in connexion with the creative work that is being done. In that particular part of the child's life he is to be left as free as possible. If we pay attention to faults of language, diction and expression, we will kill the creative tendency. The teacher may take notes of things to be dealt with at an entirely different time in the course of an entirely different lesson.

Then the teacher must try to make sure that the child is not afraid to venture on writing or speaking his own thoughts and feelings. Large numbers of children are prevented from doing anything off the beaten track because they are afraid of being laughed at. The small child, as well as the bigger one, is often far more sensitive than we think. If he feels that there is the slightest possibility of his efforts being greeted with amusement or with cheers, he curls up into his shell, and creative work is the last thing he will venture on. He lacks a feeling of security which is very necessary if our children are to write or speak creatively. They must have emotional security, and there must be no fear in their minds. At least there must be no fear of the reception that their efforts are going to meet with. Of all things that the teacher has to watch in connexion with this branch of his work this is perhaps the most important. Nothing will wither the enthusiasm of the incipient author more quickly or more successfully than an unsympathetic reception of something into which he has put his best.

The attitude of the teacher is of supreme importance. The pupil must feel that he can bring anything he produces to his teacher, and that his efforts will be received sympathetically with no condescension, that the teacher will not judge it from the standpoint of his superior knowledge and

experience, but that he will be helpful and kindly in whatever comments have to be made. He will be producing his work in an atmosphere that is really encouraging. Unless there is this attitude, the teacher will strive in vain to get his pupils to produce creative and original work.

The teacher should also create the same atmosphere in the class. It should be the normal thing for members of the class to produce writing or speeches of their own, and when this is so, the authors will have no cause to fear the reception given to their work by the class. That reception may not always be favourable, but at least it will not have in it the element of scorn and laughter that is so shrivelling. It will not be thought an unusual thing, and any criticism that is made will be given because the members of the class feel that that particular criticism is necessary. Of course criticism by the class will not come easily in the lower classes, except in so far as it is unconscious.

Creative work needs an audience, but the teacher should never make it a hard and fast rule that writings should be read aloud or speeches given to the class. It should always be left to the author to decide for himself whether he wishes to bring his work to the notice of the class or not. Individuals vary a great deal in this respect. Some have to be encouraged to tell others what they have done. Others have to be restrained from showing off too much. Some who are sensitive will refuse to do creative work if it means reading it to the class or making it public in any way. The teacher must study his pupils, and should not have one hard and fast rule for everybody. Here again the individual must be given freedom to act as he feels best. Of course the teacher will unobtrusively encourage or discourage publicity as he feels necessary.

Now creative writing or speaking springs from a person's own desire, and the urge that he has, to express his feelings

and ideas. It stands to reason, therefore, that one must have feelings and ideas to express. Creative work depends on the whole life of the child. We will not get creative work unless the child is living a full life; a life in which every side of his nature is being developed, and where his daily experiences are full of meaning and satisfaction. Creative work in any one subject will depend on the type of education as a whole which is being given. If the general education the child is getting, if the life he is living, is one where his powers of observation are being trained, where he is being taught to think and feel and act for himself, then he will certainly have ideas and feelings he will want to express in his own way, and there will be little difficulty in persuading him to do creative work. But if the education he is getting is not of this sort, if he is learning by rote and blindly imitating, if school and life are not linked up vitally, then we cannot expect much in the way of creative work.

But even with the richest and fullest type of education, it is still necessary for us to give the mind of the child something to work on. Hence the great necessity for plenty of books for reading, plenty of poems, plenty of stories, so that his mind may be given material for working on. Creative work, of course, is not simply reproduction of what has been read or heard. But it does need a basis of knowledge and a background of ideas which the mind has assimilated. Then having worked on them it is able to produce something quite new. But a well-informed mind is necessary for creative work at all stages, and the teacher must see that pupils are as well-informed at their various stages as it is possible for them to be.

The quality of the creative work done will depend on the quality of what the child reads and hears. We cannot expect the child to produce better language than he is in the habit of hearing and reading. We cannot expect him to

produce better ideas than he is in the habit of receiving from his teacher or his books. Attention must be paid to quality as well as to quantity.

Creative work in the mother-tongue may take many forms. As I have said, the teacher should allow freedom to the child. Gradually different children will discover for themselves which particular type of expression they like best, and which they can handle best. Some will be good at stories. Some will be able to make a success of poetry. Others may try serious prose of the essay type. Others may specialize in descriptive prose. Others may find their *métiers* in oral story-telling, an art which can be such a source of pleasure and benefit in village life. Others may turn to debating, discussions and speeches. Others again may have dramatic ability, and may be able to write plays. Some will have the journalistic flair and will turn their attention to class and school magazines. In the lower classes of the primary school, the first efforts will probably be along the line of telling stories. The work will nearly all be oral for the first two years. Gradually from that beginning different pupils will develop along different lines.

There should be a definite time set apart for creative work, though it need not be called by such a formidable name. It may simply be called the free work period. But this will be a time when pupils know that they can work at what they like, when the ordinary restrictions are relaxed, and they do not need to show their work for correction unless they wish to. Naturally some children will avail themselves of this period much more readily than others, and take far greater advantage of it than others. It will be necessary for the teacher to do very little for some, as the fact of giving the opportunity will be enough. Others will need help and guidance, especially at first. The teacher will have to suggest to them topics. He can have a short talk with each child

and will soon be able to find what is interesting to that child at that time, and will be able to suggest something for him to write about. Some will need many and much more definite suggestions than others. The work will have to be done individually, but there is no objection to a group of children talking over something and making a joint production, such as a play or a story. It is quite likely that the teacher will find that he has a certain residue which can do very little of this sort of work. He can then take them as a group, and can set them to work along more ordinary lines; but he should not allow himself to be too easily discouraged, especially if the children have not been accustomed to this sort of work in other classes before coming to him. But, at the same time he will certainly find that there are some to whom creative writing or speaking simply does not appeal and who get a medium of self-expression in art or in handcraft or elsewhere. Most children, however, will be able to do something along this line, if it is only finishing a story of which they have been provided with the beginning. It should again be emphasized, however, that this work should be done in every class right through the school, so that it will be the usual thing for the children. At present a teacher would get little response if he were to go suddenly to a class and tell the pupils to write anything they wanted to. But if doing this becomes an ordinary thing in school, and if the education the pupils are getting is full and rich, developing all sides of their personalities, then the situation will be altogether changed.

The teacher should never give the impression that quantity is an ideal to strive after. Especially in the lower classes, it does not matter at all if the creative product is only a couple of lines of poetry or only a few lines of prose. The important thing is that it should be the child's own, and the expression of his own thoughts and feelings. Once this is accomplished

there is no need to worry about quantity. The children should never be allowed to think that they have to fill a page or two pages or that any definite quantity of work is required.

In the higher classes, if an author consents to read his work aloud, members of his class may criticize it. But the teacher should set an example of constructive criticism. The general procedure, which can develop into a tradition, should be to note the good points first, and then proceed to any criticism which may be thought necessary. But no one, pupil or teacher, should offer a criticism, unless he has something better, some improvement, to suggest.

In the lower classes criticism should be made, as a general rule, only by the teacher, and here again, even more than in the higher classes, most emphasis should be laid on the good points. If anything is seriously wrong it must, of course, be pointed out, but in a kindly way. A great deal depends on the individual child. With some, the teacher will know that it is safe to make suggestions in class. With others he will know that it is better to take things up with them individually. Often in the earlier stages when children are rather frightened of trying themselves out, group work can be successfully used to break the ice and to accustom children to creative work. They will thus gain confidence in themselves. A group can dramatize a short story. It can make up a story. Someone in the class may suggest a subject which is generally interesting and a paragraph about this may be built up sentence by sentence, different members of the class or group offering suggestions. A poem may be built up in the same way. It is not suggested that the results of such a procedure will be of very great value, but by adopting this procedure a beginning can be made and pupils introduced gradually to creative writing. It will then not be long before individuals are

able to produce something without the help of group or teacher.

Informal talks by the teacher with the class is another way of preparing the ground. He will, of course, inevitably supply a good many ideas, but during the course of the talk he will also draw out ideas from one pupil and another. Then the pupils will be able to write something, which, while not entirely their own, will at least have something of their own in it, and they will have an opportunity of bringing in ideas of their own as they feel they want to. The teacher should not give any definite outline. It should simply be a general conversation on some subject, and the pupils be left to develop it as they wish to.

It is a good plan to try to form a special club for those who are keen on creative work. A 'story club', for instance, may be of great help to those who have talent along this line. Such a club is only a regular meeting of those who wish to do creative writing with others who are sympathetic, in order to improve their work by getting the criticism and help they need, and to focus their efforts on something definite. If such a club is formed, the teachers can gradually teach the members how to evaluate and criticize their own productions, and also anything which is brought before them. This, of course, is a very valuable practice. The pupils should learn to look for what the author is trying to do, to understand how he goes about carrying out his purpose, to judge whether he has been successful in carrying it out, and if so, why, and if not, why not. They will also pay attention to how he has used his words, figures of speech, and so on, to how he has made his impression, and to what general impression he has left. All these things, as they are learnt, will enable each member to criticize his own work, and so to understand how to improve it.

No efforts the teacher can make to help his pupils to pro-

duce creative writing—prose, poetry or drama—can be too great. While, as I have said, many will never be more than mediocre, even they will get a new meaning out of life and a new inspiration for living. And for those who do have gifts and talents, nothing can be more worthwhile than helping them to develop those gifts.

X

USING THE PLAY WAY

THERE IS no need here to go into the advantages of the play way in teaching.[1] That the young work best in the spirit of play will not be seriously disputed. With adults as well as children, it is when we find it difficult to distinguish our work from our play that we find ourselves putting forth our best efforts. If the interest and energy which play arouses can be used in school, then the pupil's work will benefit immensely, not only in the narrow sphere of the gaining of particular bits of knowledge, but in the wider sphere of his whole attitude to the subject, to education, and to life in general.

It must always be understood that the play way is not a method which can be used all the time with the whole subject (although it is true that the *spirit* of play can permeate the whole work). While play way devices will give an interest to what is being done as nothing else can, it is still impossible to avoid a good deal of drill work. At the same time, drill work can be taken up and revolutionized if the spirit of play is behind what is being done. As an example of what I mean, we have children willingly and even eagerly doing a great deal of drill work which would normally be drudgery for them, when they are working on a project. The project is a 'game' and is an example of work done in the 'play' spirit, and this makes the more uninteresting drill work which has to be done, quite a different thing. The monotony of drill work can also be relieved by a judicious use of play methods and devices as we have seen in connexion with the teaching of spelling. It always remains true that the child learns best and retains best

[1] See my *The Progressive School*, Chapter IX (Oxford University Press) for a fuller treatment of the subject.

what he has learnt when he works in the spirit of play. The thing to remember is that we have to be careful not to sacrifice real learning to a desire to bring in play devices and games. They must be our servants and not our masters.

We will now consider some practical ways in which the spirit of play may be utilized in the work of teaching the mother-tongue.

1. *Dramatics*

We have already considered the place of dramatics in oral and written work.[1]

There is one aspect of dramatic work which the teacher should always keep in mind. It is this: with children the main thing is not so much the production of a finished play. It is the actual preparation of the play or playlet, the making up of the speeches and songs, the arrangement of the cast, the making of the costumes and stage properties, the rehearsals and the co-operation. The finished production is perhaps the least important part. Yet how often it is to the finished production that we pay all our attention. It looms far too large on the horizon, and we miss the opportunities that the preparatory work offers. It is true of course, that the showing of the play is the goal before us, and that we must use that goal to make sure that the children's best goes into what is done. But the emphasis, either in the minds of the teacher or of the children, should not be on the showing of the play in public. Such emphasis will take the joy out of the preparation and the striving; and that, after all, for children just as for adults, is true joy.

With small children, in fact, it is not wise to have much public display. Their natural interest is in the preparation, and while it is necessary to have an audience, it is better to

[1] pp. 14, 18, 78, 82.

have, as a rule, an audience of more or less the same age as the actors themselves. It is bad for children to get into the habit of thinking that they must perform to adults, and that to do so is their reason for preparing a play.

Naturally plays for the small ones will be simple and need not be elaborate with regard to staging and so on. The small child has a wonderful power of imagination, and a chair can be an engine, a chariot, a boat, a camel, a horse, or a hut with equal facility. A start should be made from stories. In fact a child will make his own beginning if he is given a story which easily lends itself to dramatization. AEsop's *Fables* are a regular mine for short playlets for small children.

When choosing a story for dramatization, care should be taken to see that it is a story with definite, clear-cut action, that it has positive, definite value, that it is a story suited to the age of those who are to hear it and dramatize it. The story, and therefore the play, should be such that it will have some relation to the experience of the children who are to work with it, so that their playing may help in their development. It cannot do this if the thought is above the heads of those who are trying to express it.

The teacher should allow the play to take shape according to the ideas of the children, not according to his own preconceived notions of how it should be done. If he thinks his charges are going off the track altogether, he can guide them and give them suggestions and advice, but he should keep as light a guiding hand on the rein as possible. The young players will, in many cases, be able to find out for themselves what is wrong. The teacher is there simply as a senior partner and the less he has to bring himself into the picture the better it will be.

He will, of course, take note of mistakes in language, in ways of expression, in pronunciation or in anything else connected with the use of the mother-tongue as they go along, and will

correct either there and then while preparation is in progress or in some other lesson. The time for correction will have to be decided by the teacher according to circumstances. There should not be too much correcting while work on the play is proceeding.

Children should be encouraged to make up their own plays. This is a general rule, but now and then it is as well to give them a play ready written and carefully prepared, adapted to their age and their needs. Such plays, occasionally done, serve as a standard and a corrective. They may be taken from books of plays which are available, or may be composed by the teacher. It is usually better for the teacher to do it himself, especially in the lower classes, as he knows his pupils and their capabilities.

Besides plays there are other interesting projects which are of a dramatic nature and which can be of great use in connexion with oral work in the mother-tongue; for instance, mock trials, when someone is tried for some alleged offence. The members of a class set up a court and stage a trial with a judge, defending and prosecuting lawyers, witnesses and all the court officials. This can be made very interesting. There are also mock interviews. A position is vacant and there are a number of applicants for the position. A board of three or four members interviews the applicants who come before the board one by one. They can write out their applications and copies of their testimonials and so get practice in written work also. With live members on the 'board' this can be made a very interesting practice. Parts can be changed round, so as to give all a chance in the different positions. Another project of the same type is the mock election.

11. *Magazines*

We have seen how the personal magazine can be used.[1]

[1] p. 81.

From this may develop the class magazine. This can be a source of great interest to the class and will certainly add greatly to the interest taken in writing in the mother-tongue. An editorial committee can be appointed by the class with one pupil as chief editor. Articles of various kinds are submitted to the editors. Every one in the class is expected to make some contribution, either composition or illustrations. All the contributions need not be printed but a selection can be made and the teacher may be called in to help in selection or to suggest corrections. Usually funds will not be available for printing the magazine, but it can be written out by hand by those pupils whose handwriting is good. There will then be one copy for the whole class. This may not be as good as a printed magazine, but is not a bad substitute. This class magazine may come out once a month or once a term, or as often as the enthusiasm of the class and the editors allows.

This may develop into a school magazine. The school magazine will naturally not give as much scope to all and sundry as do the class magazines. In the school magazine will be only the best contributions from the whole school. It forms a good field for expression, though it naturally tends to become the preserve of the best students. It sets a goal before everybody which is not beyond the reach of most, and in doing so renders a great service. But there should be both class and school magazines. If the school is divided into houses it is also possible to have house magazines. Most of this magazine work will have to be done out of school hours, but it is usually enjoyed by everyone.

III. *Games*

A. FOR THE PRIMARY CLASSES.

1. A picture with a large number of objects in it is put before the children and they are required to write down all the names of objects in the picture which begin with one parti-

cular letter. Or they may be asked to find one name of an object in the picture for each of as many letters of the alphabet as possible. (If possible one word for each letter.)

2. 'Matching boards' as described in *Instruction in Indian Primary Schools.*[1] A board or a strong piece of cardboard is prepared with letters or words in horizontal lines. Below each letter or word a space is left empty. The children have sets of the letters or words, and have to select from their sets the one which corresponds to the first one on the board, and put it in the space on the board under the first letter or word. They then do the same with all until they have matched all on the board.

3. 'Flashing the card.' The class is divided into two groups, A and B. Each child in each group has a card on which a word is written. Each child keeps the card turned down so that the word may not be seen. First one child from group A goes over to group B, shows his card for two seconds, then turns it over again and asks a member of group B to tell him the word written on the card. If he says the word correctly, then the child from group A who has shown the card remains in group B, and the child who answered correctly goes to group A and shows his card. He then reverses it and asks one of group A to tell him the word. If this is done correctly that child then remains in group A. If the child who is asked to read the word cannot do so, or does so incorrectly, then that child along with the one who flashed the card goes to the group from which the child who flashed the card came. Then a child from the other group crosses to the opposing group and flashes his card. The group with most members at the end of the game wins. Sentences, instead of words, may be written on the flash cards and the time for which the word or sentence is flashed may be varied according to their

1 p. 41, Oxford University Press.

difficulty and according to the class or the stage which the class is at.

4. 'What is this?' The children sit round in a circle. (In a big class they may be divided into groups.) One child sits in the middle of the circle. Then each child writes a word on his slate. When finished, they hold up their slates so that the child in the centre may see them. The centre child then goes round reading what is written on each slate. If he fails to read a word, or hesitates longer than two or three seconds, the child whose word he has not been able to read, provided it is spelt correctly and written legibly, goes into the centre, and the one who was in the centre takes his place.

There are different variations of this game. The children may write sentences instead of words. They may write down words of which the centre child is to give the opposites. (In this case, if he cannot give the opposite, the child who has written the word is required to give it himself before he is allowed to go into the centre.) The children may write nouns in the singular and the centre child be required to give the plurals, or vice versa. The children may write questions and the centre child be required to answer them. They may write answers and the centre child be required to give the questions. In each case the child who has written must be required to give the correct answer before he is allowed to go into the middle, if the centre child fails. If he goes round the whole group without failing, another may take his place in the centre.

5. 'Hide and seek.' Different words or sentences are written on cards. One child is sent out of the room, and the other children shut their eyes. The teacher places the cards in various places round the room. The class then decide what word or sentence to ask the one outside to find, and another child is sent out to tell him what he is to look for and to bring him in. This child then proceeds to look for this word or sentence. If there are plenty of cards two children can be

sent out of the room at once, the class being divided into two teams, one child being sent from each team.

This game can be made more difficult by having half sentences written on cards and the children being given the other halves which will complete them. They then have to look for the half they need. They can all look for their halves at the same time. The cards in the room can be numbered and the child will write down the number of the card with the half sentence which he is looking for when he finds it. The teacher will have to be careful to frame the sentences so that the half that the child has will go with only one particular half on the cards. In the same way questions can be written on the cards, and the children given the answers and asked to find the questions to go with their answers, and vice versa. Words may be written on the cards and the children given their opposites and required to find the opposite of the word they have. Pictures may be put up on the wall and the children given a sentence describing a picture. They have then to find the picture. There are numbers of variations which may be given to this game.

6. 'Passing an order.' The class is seated in a large circle. The teacher whispers a sentence or an order to the first child. That child then whispers exactly what he heard to the next child and so on right round the circle. The last child does what the order tells him to do or if he has received an order that cannot be carried out, he stands up and tells what order he has received.

A variation of this for small children is as follows. One child is sent out of the room. Then in the hearing of the class another child is given a message to give the child outside. This message will be one telling him to do various things, such as to ask the fifth boy in the second row for a pencil which he is to lay on the teacher's desk. (The orders or messages may be made more complicated according to the stage of the class.)

The class then see how the child to whom the message was given carries out his instructions. If a mistake is made the class find out by questioning the two children how the mistake was made.

7. 'I have a basket' (for small children). The first child says to his neighbour, 'I have a basket'. The second one replies, 'What's in it?' The first one says, 'A'. The second one then names something whose name starts with 'A'. He then turns to the third child and says, 'I have a basket'. The third child answers, 'What's in it?' and is given the answer 'B'. He then names something whose name starts with 'B'. so it goes on through the alphabet. On the second round different things must be named from those named in the first round.

8. Spelling games.[1]

9. 'Making sentences.' A number of words are written out on pieces of cardboard. Each child is given one word. The teacher calls out a sentence. Those having the words in the sentence run out to the front and put themselves in the right order so that they make the sentence. They hold their words in front of them. This may be made a team game by having two teams and two sets of words. Then the team which correctly forms the sentence first, wins. It is better to play this game outside if possible.

Another sentence-making game is for the teacher to put up on the board a number of words. The pupils are then asked to make as many sentences as possible using only those words but using them as often as they like.

10. Before the class comes in the teacher hides a number of cards in different places in the room. On each card is a question. (The questions may be of any sort which the teacher wishes to ask.) When the children come in, they are

[1] See Chapter VII, pp. 97-100.

at once set to work to look for cards. At the end of three minutes, or some time limit, they are called to their places, and then set to work to write the answers to the questions they have found. The one with the most correct answers wins the game. This game also can be played more easily out of doors.

11. 'Snap.' Words or sentences are written on cards about the size of playing-cards. There should be fifty-six cards in a set with each word or sentence on four cards. That is, there will be fourteen different words or sentences. (These cards may be prepared by older children who can write well. Eight children can play at a time. Each child is given seven cards which he holds in his hand face downwards. Each in turn plays a card face upwards in front of him. When a card is played with the same word on it as is on one of the three other cards showing, the first player to shout out the word collects the two piles on which the two words are. Any player may shout whether the card with the word on it is on his own pile or not. When a player has played all his cards on to the pile in front of him, he takes them up again keeping them face downwards, and goes on playing as before. When a player wins another pile he puts it under his own pile. If the game is played with sentences, some word such as 'snap' or 'grab' should be shouted on recognizing two similar sentences, instead of shouting out the whole sentence.

12. 'Blackboard races.' The class is divided up into teams (as many teams as there are blackboards available). On the back of the blackboard the teacher writes some sentences with words missing. When the signal is given the first child in each team runs up, reads the first sentence on the back of the blackboard assigned to his team, and then comes round to the front of the board and writes up the missing word. He then goes back to his place and the second child in the team comes up and does the second word in the same way.

The team which correctly completes all the words first, wins. If wall blackboards are used then the lists of sentences may be written on paper and put up on the wall beside the blackboard at a short distance. Other things besides filling in missing words can be done: opposites of words may be asked for, singulars and plurals. Lists of words with the letters mixed may be written up, and the children required to write out the words correctly.

13. 'Finding the stranger.' Lists of words are given of which all but one are connected with one subject or are of the same sort. The children have to cross out or write down the one which is not a member of the series. For example:

> mouth nose eye *tail* foot hand
> black blue *heavy* red yellow white
> cow donkey bull buffalo *crow* dog.

14. 'A secret message.' Each letter is given a numerical value. Thus 'a' will be 1, 'b' will be 2, and so on. A sentence is then written out with numbers in place of letters and the children have to decipher and write it out correctly. Another form of this game is for each letter to be represented by the one after it in the order of the alphabet. Thus 'a' will be represented by 'b', and so on.

15. 'Description game.' The teacher describes some object without mentioning its name. The class has to guess what the object is. The class may be divided into groups and the group to guess first wins. They will be given turns in guessing. The teacher can make this as easy or as difficult as he finds necessary.

16. The class is seated in a circle and one child is in the centre. The centre child has a ball or something he can toss. He tosses the ball to anyone in the circle and says one of the

words, 'earth', 'air', or 'water'. The one who receives the ball must respond, within ten seconds, with the name of some creature that lives in the realm named. If he fails while the centre child counts ten, or if he gives a wrong reply, he takes the place of the centre child, and so the game goes on. This game can also be used in connexion with grammar. The centre child can name one of the parts of speech such as noun, adjective, verb, and the child who receives the ball has to give a word which is a noun, adjective or verb as required.

17. Each member of the class has a piece of paper fixed on his back on which is written the name of some animal or thing. He does not know what the word is. Each one tries to find out, by asking questions, what the word is. Those answering are allowed to answer only 'Yes' or 'No'. The class may be divided into teams and that team wins all of whose members first discover what they are.

18. 'Going travelling.' The children sit in a circle. The teacher starts by saying: 'I am going travelling and I shall take with me—.' At the end of the sentence he puts in the name of something, say, 'a mango'. So he says: 'I am going travelling and I shall take with me a mango.' Then the first child says the same sentence but puts in a different word at the end. He may say: 'I am going travelling and I shall take with me a slate.' The third one does the same substituting a different word at the end of the sentence. When all have had their turn the teacher then says: 'I shall eat my mango.' All the rest then have to say the same sentence but at the end they keep the same word as they have used before. Thus the second one will say 'I shall eat my slate', and so on. When all have finished the teacher again says: 'I am going travelling and I shall take—', putting in any word he likes. Then again all follow with the same sentence using different

words at the end. Then the teacher starts his second sentence making it different this time. He may use such a sentence as 'I shall sit on my—', or anything that will make the children's sentences amusing.

B. FOR THE MIDDLE CLASSES

1. 'A story game.'[1]

2. 'Charades.' Some members of the class go out and select a word with two or three syllables, each of which makes a complete word when used by itself (e.g. *Khush-bû*). The party which have gone out then quickly prepare an act in which the first syllable will be used. The acting and the dialogue can be anything the pupils concerned choose, but they must bring in the word, that is, the first syllable used as a word. Then they go out and put on a second act, in which the second syllable will be used as a word. The second act need have no connexion with the first, and may be on any subject. The only stipulation is that the second syllable shall be clearly used as a word during the talk. If there is a third syllable there will be a third act. Finally an act is put on in the course of which the whole word selected is used. The rest of the class, the audience, have been trying to discover what the word is and when the acting is over they offer their suggestions.

This game gives excellent practice in oral work and in developing readiness with language, and confidence.

3. 'Telegrams.' A fairly long word is taken, such as 'Rawalpindi'. The pupils are then set to make up a telegram in which the letters of the key word shall be the first letters of the words in the telegram in the order in which they come in

[1] See Chapter II, pp. 14-15.

the key word. Suppose the key word is 'Amritsar' then the telegram might be:

Atma
Meerut
Rupee is taken. Send another.
Rajkumar

4. 'A description game.' The class is divided into two groups. One member from each group goes out of the room. Then each group decides on some subject or thing, and the two who have gone outside come back. The one from group A goes to group B and the one from group B goes to group A. Each group now begins work. The first member makes a remark, a full sentence about the thing chosen. After he has said the sentence, the one who has been outside has an opportunity to guess what the thing is. If he fails then the next member of the group says a sentence about the thing and again a change of guessing is given to the outsider. The game goes on in this way until the one who has been outside successfully guesses the thing about which the members of the group are talking. The one of the two who have been outside who first guesses correctly goes back to his own group, and that group also keeps the one who has failed. Then two more go outside and another subject is decided on and so the game goes on. The group which is bigger at the end of the game wins.

5. 'A question game.' The class is divided into two groups. One member from each group goes outside and these two decide on something. They then come back into the room. The one from group A goes to group B and the one from group B goes to group A. The members of the groups then in turn ask questions in an endeavour to find out what the thing is. The two who have been outside are allowed to answer only 'Yes' or 'No' to all questions. The groups can ask any sort of question they like, but must take turns to

ask questions so that every one gets a chance. The group which first finds out keeps its own member and the other one who went out also. That group wins which is bigger at the end of the game.

6. 'Missing terms.' Pupils are given lists such as the following:

bird	:	air	:	: fish	:	————
day	:	——	:	: night	:	moon.
iegs	:	walking	:	: tongue	:	————

The first to fill in all the missing terms correctly wins, or the team all of whose members first fill them in correctly. The terms can be graded in difficulty to suit the class.

In all these games the teacher, if not making corrections on the spot, will be making notes of things which should be dealt with later on.

IV. *Play Way Exercises*

A. FOR THE PRIMARY CLASSES

1. Two or three pictures of different people or of different objects are given and also a list of adjectives. The children are required to sort out the adjectives into lists to go with the pictures. That is, if there are three pictures, the adjectives will be divided into three lists. In the first list will be all the adjectives which suit the first picture and so on. The teacher must be careful in making up the lists of adjectives to see that each adjective can go with only one picture, or if he does not do that, to tell the children that some adjectives may go with more than one picture.

A similar exercise is to give a list of all the different things found in a house and then set the children to divide these into lists according to the rooms in which these things are usually

found. That is, there will be lists for the kitchen, bedroom, and so on.

Another variation of the same exercise is to have three heads such as land, air and water. A list of words is given which has to be divided according to their connexion with each head. Things usually found in the air will go in the air list, and so on.

The same exercise may be used with verbs, headings being given and a list of verbs divided up according to their connexion with one or other heading.

2. A list of nouns is given and also a list of verbs. The children have to put the correct verb with each noun. For example:

Fires	play
Winds	burn
Trees	blow
Children	sprout

This simple type of exercise may be graded in difficulty from very simple examples as given above to those of much greater difficulty where subjects and predicates are more complicated.

3. A question is written down and under it is written an answer. If the children think that the answer is correct they write 'Yes' after it. If they think it is wrong, they write 'No' after it. For example:

Why do you go to school?
I go to school to have a bath.————————

What day comes after Sunday?
Monday comes after Sunday. ————————

This exercise again can be graded in difficulty to suit the class with which it is being done.

4. A number of different exercises may be made up on the principle of filling in blanks left in sentences. A list of words may be given from which the missing words are to be chosen. Exercises with all the different parts of speech may be given in this way, also with question words, such as why, how, where, etc. These exercises can also be graded as required.

A story can be written out with occasional blanks for single words, and a list of the missing words given. The children have to fill in the correct words in the blank spaces. This may be done orally or may be written.

A sentence is given in which one word is underlined and one word is missing. The children have to fill in the word which is the opposite of the word italicized. For example:

> Do not *send* the money but———it with you.
> The floor has got *dirty* so you must make it——— again.
> Play *more* games and eat———food.

5. A statement is given and after it a number of results of that statement are given, only one of which is possible. The child has to choose the possible result. For example:

A boy kicks a football.	The ball will hit him.
	The ball will climb a tree.
	The ball will go in the direction in which he kicked it.
A man hits a dog.	The dog will howl and run away.
	The dog will ask for more.
	The dog will eat the stick.

6. A number of sentences are given, which, because of one word, do not make sense. The children have to pick out

the word which makes nonsense of the sentence and put in its place the correct word. For example:

> The carpenter cut the horse in half.
> He was so thirsty that he drank a lot of bread.
> He kicked the ball through the wall.

7. A few lines of poetry are written down as though they were prose. That is, one line follows directly after the one before it and is not put on a fresh line. The children have to write out the poetry in its proper form.

8. Two lists of words are given in which the words in the second list are the opposites of those in the first list. The children have to write out the words in pairs bringing together each word from the first list and its opposite from the second list.

The same sort of exercise can be given with questions and answers. In one list are questions and in the other list are the answers. The children have to bring the correct questions and answers together.

9. The children are told that 'and' and 'but' are having a competition to see which can join together most sentences. They are then given a number of pairs of sentences some of which can be joined by 'and' and some by 'but'. They are asked to see whether 'and' or 'but' won the competition. The same exercise may be used with other connectives.

10. Solving and making up riddles of the 'Who am I?' type. For example:

> I am round.
> I am made of leather.
> Boys kick me.
> They play a game with me.
> Who am I?

B. FOR THE MIDDLE CLASSES

A good many of the exercises which have been given for primary classes can also be used in middle classes with the contents made more difficult.

1. The words of a sentence are put in the wrong order, and the pupils are required to write out the sentence with the words in the right order. The same sort of exercise may be given to advanced pupils where the clauses and phrases of a complex sentence are mixed up, and have to be put back into the right order. In the same way the sentences in a short paragraph may be mixed up and pupils required to write out the paragraph correctly.

2. The pupils are given pairs of sentences which are to be joined by different connectives. The exercise can be set out as a competition among the connectives. See exercise 9 on page 137.

3. The following type of exercise may be given. 'Once a boy wrote a story. In the story he used some words which were wrong. Here is the story and you will see that the wrong words are underlined. You will also see that there is a list of words at the end of the story. This is a list of the words he should have used. Read through the story and choose the words that should go in the places of the underlined ones, which are wrong. Then write out the story correctly.'

This exercise can be graded according to the class with which it is used. To make it more difficult the wrong words can be left without being underlined. The mistakes may not be simply mistakes of words but may be mistakes of grammar or idiom and so the difficulty increased.

4. Two lists are given the pupils, side by side. In one list are names and in the other list are definitions of the things in the first list. The exercise is to choose the definition that

goes with each name in the first list and write it out correctly. For example:

A précis	is	doing things together.
An election	is	a story about the truth of which people are not sure.
Co-operation	is	choosing people to fill some office.
A rumour	is	putting the gist of a passage as shortly as possible.

This type of exercise may be used with different kinds of lists. For example, we may have lists of people who do things on one side and the work they do on the other side. Or we may have actions and the reasons for the actions. For example:

He let the thief escape	because he got wet through.
He fell ill with pneumonia	because he wanted to get work.
He was persuaded to leave home	because he was not strong enough to hold him.

We may have lists of questions and answers. We may divide proverbs into two parts and make lists of the beginnings and endings. We may have lists of nouns and of adjectives that commonly go with them. For example:

As sweet	as	a lion.
As brave	as	a donkey.
As stupid	as	sugar.

5. A number of sentences are given to pupils and certain words or phrases in these sentences are underlined. Below each sentence are written three or four words. Out of these

three or four the pupil has to choose the one which is the synonym of the word or phrase italicized. For example:

Little by little the heap of earth became smaller.
(slowly, gradually, unwillingly)

The same exercise may be given with opposites instead of synonyms.

6. Pupils can be given a picture letter in which here and there small pictures are used instead of words and the pupil has to write out the letter in ordinary language.

7. On one side are put the beginnings of letters, and on the other side are put the endings of letters. But the beginnings and endings do not belong to the same letter. That is, if the beginning is that of a business letter, the ending may be that of a letter to one's father and so on. The pupil has to arrange the beginnings and endings in proper order so that they belong to the same letter.

8. A number of sentences are given, some of which are correct and some of which are incorrect. The mistakes may be of any description according to the particular work the class is doing. The pupils are required to write 'Yes' after the ones which they think are correct and 'No' after the ones which they think are incorrect. Finally they will correct the incorrect ones.

These are some suggestions of the play way type of exercise that may be given. Teachers will be able to work out many others for themselves.[1]

[1] For a regular course of play way exercises in Urdu see *Play Way Urdu*, Parts I-III, Oxford University Press. This course is for use with classes 2, 3 and 4.

XI

INDIVIDUAL WORK

It is being recognized in all departments of education that every individual differs from every other individual, that each has his own abilities, that each has his own peculiar difficulties, and each needs different treatment and teaching from all others. If we are to approach success in really helping our pupils and if we are to achieve the aims of education, we must use methods which enable us to give individual attention to our pupils. The whole of our work in school may not be done along individual work lines, but at least a considerable portion of it should be, and the arrangements we make for teaching any subject should make it possible for individual help and attention to be given. This is true in the case of the mother-tongue as with all other subjects.

One of the best methods of individual work is that in which use is made of assignments. Each pupil has an assignment card and the teacher has an assignment chart.

The pupils are given the first assignment for the year at the beginning of the year. Each pupil then begins to work at his assignment during the periods set aside for the mother-tongue in school and may, of course, put in as much time at the assignment during preparation time or at home, as he wishes. The teacher should give some indication as to the time that should be spent on the assignment out of school hours. In the middle classes very little time apart from the periods in school should be necessary. In the high department the time to be spent on the assignment will be the time normally spent on homework for the subject plus the time in school. The assignment will be framed so that it can be finished by the average pupil in the time allotted to the teaching of the

mother-tongue. Thus if there are six periods allotted to the subject the teacher will take into account that probably at least one period will be required for taking the class as a whole or in groups, and therefore frame his assignments so that they can be finished, by all but the very slowest pupils, in five periods plus the time ordinarily spent on homework. Thus if the periods are 40-minute periods and 15 minutes is to be spent on homework each day, the assignment should provide work which can be done easily in 4 hours 35 minutes. It is always wise to err on the side of making the assignments short rather than long.

During the periods in school when the pupils are working at their assignments they should be free to come to the teacher at any time when they need help. They should be free to consult one another as long as it is real consultation and not simply copying. This has to be watched carefully. They are free to use any books from the library. They can work at any part of the assignment they wish to. If the teacher finds that some particular difficulty is being felt by a number of pupils, he may take the class as a whole and deal with that particular difficulty. When the class gets divided out, as some working more quickly get ahead of others, the teacher may take groups of pupils who are more or less at the same stage when they have a common difficulty.

When a pupil has finished his assignment, that is, when he has done all the written work required in the assignment, has read what is given to be read and has prepared the work that has to be learnt, he brings it to the teacher to be corrected. The teacher will then mark the written work, and will test orally the work that had to be done orally, and may ask some questions to see whether the reading has been done. After a teacher has had some experience he will find that it does not take long to find out whether the assignment has been properly done or not.

If the teacher is satisfied with the work done, both written and oral, he marks the date against the name of the pupil under the number of the assignment on his own chart and also marks the date against the number of the assignment on the pupil's card. He then gives the pupil the next assignment. The rule must be that before the next assignment is started the corrections in the work of the previous one must be done. When the next assignment is brought up to be tested the teacher should glance back to see that the corrections have been properly done. It is a good idea for written work to be done on alternate pages of the exercise book and the other page left for correction work.

If the teacher is not satisfied with the work done, he points out to the pupil where his work is not up to standard, gives him any help that may be necessary, and sends him back to make good his deficiency and to bring up the assignment again when it is properly prepared. It is quite legitimate for the teacher to have different standards for different members of the class. He is quite justified in refusing to take work from a bright pupil which he would accept from one who is not very good at the subject. This is one of the big advantages of the method, namely that it enables the teacher to vary his method and demands and help according to the individual's needs and capacity.

Naturally some pupils will work more quickly than others, and gradually the class will be spaced out. The teacher has to keep an eye on the weaker members and put in more of his time with them than he need do with the more clever ones. They are able to go ahead with less help, and they benefit from working by themselves; but the weaker ones will need more help and will benefit more from it. The teacher can see from a glance at his chart who are apt to fall behind and who are not doing as much work as they should be doing, and then pay special attention to them.

Sometimes a teacher will find that he gets a rush of pupils wanting their assignments corrected especially if the class is on the large side. The only way of dealing with this situation is to fix a time out of school hours when assignments can be brought to him for correction. This will not have to be done every day. The teacher will have to judge when it is necessary.

In the teaching of the mother-tongue, assignments may be used in two different ways. On the side of grammar and composition they may be used as has just been described. They may also be used in the same way when dealing with texts and readers, though this is apt to result in too much emphasis on written work and in neglect of oral work. It has been found that a somewhat different method can be used with readers.

The assignments are prepared in exactly the same way as for any other subject; that is, just as though the pupils were going to work at them by themselves. Certain portions are set to be read, suggestions are given as to how those portions should be studied. Help with difficult passages or words is given. Questions are asked which will help the pupils to think about what they are reading. Work will be set which they are to do, and occasionally written work may be set. But when the class comes for the period in school, instead of each pupil working individually, the teacher takes the class as a whole. The pupils will have prepared their work with the aid of the assignment, and the teacher will then have before him a class which has thought about the lesson and has done some work on it, and which will therefore be able to take a much more intelligent interest in the lesson. In other words the assignment has been used as a guide and help to preparation, and will then be the basis of the teacher's lessons in school. But those lessons will be taken with the class as a whole. Normally this will be found a

more satisfactory way of teaching readers, especially in middle classes. In high classes it is possible to use text and reader assignments in the usual way, and this is done in English schools where individual work methods are used. If this is done care must be taken to provide sufficient time for oral work. It must always be remembered of course, that using the assignment method never precludes the taking of the class as a whole at any time or the taking of groups of pupils together at any time. As long as the time-table is kept, there is no difficulty in doing this.

There is sometimes a misunderstanding about assignments. Too often they are thought to be merely a kind of examination paper, or lists of questions. Such things are, of course, not assignments. The assignment has at least four functions to perform. Firstly, it details the work to be done in a certain time. It is a contract, and the reading, written and oral work to be done in a week or in some fixed unit of time, is set out. Secondly, it tries to help the pupil to think for himself and to work for himself. This is its most important function. Suggestions are made which will lead him to come to his own conclusions. Tasks are given him to do for which he will have to use his brains and initiative. Questions are asked which will lead him to find out things for himself and to think for himself. Thirdly, the assignment is a guide and help to study. Lines of study are suggested and in the assignment the pupil should receive hints as to how he should tackle the task before him. Fourthly, the assignment supplies information which supplements the information that the pupil can get from his textbook or from library books. The assignment also tells him where necessary information can be secured and gives references to books in the library.

It is obvious from what has been said that the making of an assignment, especially when the work is first started, is

not altogether an easy task. The teacher cannot just sit down and detail so many pages of the textbook to be 'done' and write out a few questions on what is to be found in those pages. The making of an assignment requires careful preparation of the material, a knowledge of what is in the books in the library and a knowledge of the pupils for whom the assignment is being prepared. But in preparing it the teacher is making a careful preparation for his work with his class, and gradually the task of preparing assignments presents less difficulty, though it is always necessary to take great care and to remember the functions of the assignment.

There are some great advantages to be gained by working with some such scheme of individual work as has been outlined, whereby our pupils are enabled to work by themselves and for themselves.

1. Each pupil can work at his own pace. He does not have to make a vain struggle to keep up with the rest of the class if he is slow, trying to understand things which, though clear to the majority of the class, are not clear to him, resulting in his gradually becoming enveloped in a fog from which he never emerges. On the other hand if the pupil is quick he does not have to slow down his pace to suit that of the slower or average pupils, but can go ahead as quickly as he likes. He can thus accomplish far more than under a class teaching system, and also does not lose his interest in the subject through boredom. The quick pupils can get through more work and can become increasingly interested in the subject, while the slow ones have a chance to get the extra help they need, and so are able to understand thoroughly what they do, even though they do not get through as much work as they appear to under a system of class teaching. In reality they do far more work, and, because they have a chance of understanding better what they are trying to do,

are also more interested in the subject. We always lose interest in what we cannot understand.

2. The result of such a scheme of individual work is, therefore, that far more interest is taken in the work by everybody. Slow and quick pupils gain interest, and those who are in between are more interested because we always take more interest in what we are doing and learning for ourselves when our brain is active, than we do when simply doing what we are told where no particular effort of mind is required. Thus for everyone concerned there is more interest in the work that is being done. It is certainly much more interesting and satisfying for the teacher.

3. There is far more real work done under a scheme of individual work. Each one is actively working, using mind and brain, and actively doing, learning or practising. There is none of the passive sitting while the teacher lectures or talks. Individual work does mean activity of mind, and this is one of its main claims to being a successful method.

4. If a scheme of individual work is used we are able to cater far better for individual differences. There is no need to stress the point that no two people are alike and that in preferences, tastes, abilities, likes and dislikes, everyone is different from everyone else. Usually, however, we do not make much allowance for this in our teaching method. We try to deal with children as though they were all more or less alike, or at least as though there were a large *bloc* in each class of those who are practically the same. Dealing with a class as a whole it is difficult to do anything else. But if we are going to do the best we can for our pupils, and if we are going to carry out the aims that we have before ourselves in teaching the mother-tongue, then obviously we have to take account of individual differences. We have to take account of differences in speech difficulties, in ability in oral work, where one is self-confident and another shy and retiring and

a third stutters. We have to take account of differing home environments which make so much difference to the quality of work turned out, and to the type of subjects in which a child will be interested. In many such ways a system by which children are dealt with as individuals will enable us to do far more for them than we can possibly do in any other way.

5. Then also, the teacher, if he is dealing with pupils individually, is in a far better position to help them in a real way. Individual teaching is its own reward because the teacher feels that he is really helping the pupil. He is able to understand the difficulties of his pupils far better. Each pupil has his own particular difficulties which no one else has. So often, when dealing with a class as a whole, we feel that while perhaps half or two-thirds of the class have understood and have been helped by what we have said and done, there are those who just passively sit and acquiesce, but whose difficulties have not been touched, or at any rate, have not been solved. Individual work enables the teacher really to teach, and is a much more satisfactory way of dealing with his pupils and the subjects they are learning.

6. Individual work means, in one way, an economy of time. So often, in the higher classes, school is a place where work is tested and given but the real learning is done at home or in preparation time. Time in school is taken up with writing copious notes and not with working. With an individual work system where assignments are used, school becomes a place where real work and learning are done and the necessity for home work will become very much less.

7. When assignments are used the child has the satisfaction of being given a definite task which he can accomplish in a short time (a week), after which he can go on with another task. Work is not a matter of an endless textbook from which so many pages have to be studied each day and whose

end is never in sight. He has a series of definite tasks, each finished quickly, and thus his interest is kept up.

8. The method teaches self-reliance. The pupil learns to depend on his own efforts. He learns to help himself and not to expect to have everything given him by the teacher. It is most valuable for inculcating habits of independence in work and thinking.

There are also difficulties and objections which have to be taken into account when considering individual work.

1. It means harder work for the teacher. I think that all who have worked with assignments will agree that, on the whole, such a system does require more work not only from the pupil but also from the teacher. Assignments have to be carefully prepared and revised every now and then. There is naturally a good deal of written work to be corrected. There is oral work which must be tested. Dealing with pupils individually inevitably takes more time than dealing with them as a class. But at the same time the amount of extra work and time required is often exaggerated. Under a class system of teaching the teacher usually has a good deal of correction work to do out of school hours. And he is expected to prepare his lessons carefully. Working with assignments ensures that this preparation is done. Usually it is not possible to do all the correcting and testing of assignments in the periods which are given to the subject. Some of this work has to be done out of school hours. Unless the class is very large the amount of extra work that the teacher has to do in this way is no more than he would have to do when correcting exercises under the class teaching system, and he will not have to spend more time over correction work than he would normally do when working according to the class teaching system. If the class is very large, the correction work becomes a difficult problem, but then it also does so with the class teaching system.

Even if it is found that the teacher has to put in somewhat more time when using assignments, my own experience is that there is more than sufficient compensation for the extra time in the greatly increased efficiency of the work and the greatly increased satisfaction that comes from knowing that one is really meeting the needs of one's pupils, and is helping them much more effectively than is possible under the other system.

2. When classes are large it is admittedly difficult to work with such a system. It can be done with classes up to 35 or so, although it gets increasingly difficult when the number rises above 30. Larger classes mean a larger demand on the teacher's time out of school hours until the limit is passed. This, of course, is not really an argument against individual work. It is an argument against large classes. But as things are, unless the teacher is self-sacrificing, little can be done as long as he is forced to try to get information into (one can hardly use the word 'teach'), forty or more pupils at a time.

3. There is a danger that pupils will copy from one another or from the exercise books of those who have gone before. Of course, copying is by no means unknown where the class is taught as a whole. But there is certainly need for special care in this matter where assignments are used. It is not usually difficult to detect copying where it is being systematically carried on. Short tests at frequent intervals will give the teacher a chance to check the work of his pupils and to compare the results of the tests with the work done in the assignments. With older pupils the majority soon understand the value of the method and of the damage they are doing themselves by simply copying out someone else's work, and are open to reason on the subject. It must be admitted, however, that this is one of the things that has to be watched carefully if assignments are used.

4. The whole work of the class cannot, or at least should not, be conducted on individual work lines. There should be opportunities for group work and the class should be taken as a whole every now and then, say, at least once a week. We must avoid going to the other extreme and making our pupils too individualistic. The teacher can take the class as a whole, or a group of pupils at a time, whenever need arises, and group projects can be made part of the assignments to avoid a too one-sided development. Under the system no objection is made to pupils working together provided that it is really co-operative work. But as has been pointed out, care has to be taken to see that when two or three pupils are working together it is not work on the part of one and copying on the part of the others. Those who are allowed to work together should be those who are more or less of the same standard of intelligence and attainment. Weaker ones should be allowed to get occasional help from better pupils but usually when they need help they should come to the teacher.

5. The objection of expense is sometimes urged against a scheme of assignments and individual work. It is true that it is more expensive because of the cost of printing assignments. There is also the necessity for good libraries. Libraries there should be in any case. They can be built up gradually and although the printing or cyclostyling of assignments does mean extra expense, it is not a very big item. It is possible for a number of schools in a neighbourhood, if they agree to use assignments, to co-operate in the framing of the assignments and share in the expense of having them printed. Although it is also necessary to have assignments revised every now and then, they can usually be used for two or three years or sometimes longer. This depends on the subject. Supplementary assignments often avoid the difficulty of reprinting a whole set.

6. Another difficulty that has been found to be very real is that there is a continual drain on the libraries. Books are taken away and not returned. They sometimes are not properly looked after and soon fall to pieces. The disappearance of books is a very serious difficulty. Pupils must have the free use of the class library if the system is to be successful and it is difficult to keep a check on the books that are taken out. The teacher certainly has not time to do so when he is busy helping pupils and correcting their work. The most hopeful line along which this difficulty may be solved is to get the help of some of the senior boys and have a chart with the titles of the books most commonly used with a space under the title for initials and dates of those who take out books. This chart can be near the library cupboard and one boy can be detailed each week to sit near the library and to see that those who take out books put down their initials as they take the book and cross off their initials when they put it back. This is not free from objections but does cause a certain check to be put on the movements of books. I have found that this same difficulty is by no means confined to schools in India. It seems to be world wide.

7. It is sometimes objected that the same assignment is not suitable for all pupils in a class. The clever boy needs a different assignment from that needed by the dull boy. This difficulty is easily met by having graded assignments. There may be two or three sets on the same course of study and so each grade of pupil can get the sort of assignment which he requires.

While there are undoubtedly difficulties in using a scheme of individual work, the advantages to be gained from it are very great and the difficulties, as I have tried to show, are by no means insuperable. There can be no doubt about the increased effectiveness of teaching work when assignments are used, nor about the general benefit to the whole life and personality of the pupil.

XII

THE PROJECT METHOD

THE PROJECT METHOD may be used to provide interest and motivation in the teaching of the mother-tongue as in other subjects. Briefly the project method is a way of using the purposes of the child to ensure that what he does in school will be linked up with his needs and desires and will not be altogether divorced from his life. The method is not, strictly speaking, a method or technique of teaching subjects. It is rather a philosophy of education, a way of determining the curriculum, at least for a time. Its effect is to give school work a really intrinsic interest, to correlate all the work done, or a great deal of it, round a central activity, which arises from some need of the child which he feels, and so to make learning much more interesting, easy and real.

The first step is for the class to choose a project. There may be one project for the whole class or the class may be divided into two groups. It is naturally easier if the whole class agrees on a project which can be carried out by all the members. The choosing of what they want to do will not be done all at once. A number of days may be spent discussing what is to be done. There are sure to be different needs which different members of the class feel they would like to meet. It may be that they feel the need of a little room for some purpose. They may want to keep fowls. They may feel the need of a co-operative shop to provide things they require. The teacher is a member of the group and guides the discussion and helps the class to come to a conclusion which appeals to all, and to choose something of which all, or at least the great majority, feel the need, and

which at the same time will provide an adequate correlating centre.

The class now have an aim before them. They have a definite task to accomplish. They will now spend their time carrying out a purpose of their own, and in so doing will engage in various activities. They will thus learn various things which it is necessary for them to know if they are to carry out their purpose successfully. If they are going to run a shop they must know how to keep accounts and how to fix the prices of things in the shop. This involves knowledge of certain arithmetical processes. These things they are now anxious to learn because they see that what they are learning serves some practical purpose, and that without this knowledge they cannot do what they want to do. Thus there is no difficulty in developing interest in the subject. The interest is already there. In the same way many other subjects may be brought in.

The projects that are undertaken by a class may vary greatly in the time taken to carry them out and in the width of the field in which interest is created. Some projects may last a class a whole year. Others may last only a term or even a few weeks. Some may take in practically every subject in the curriculum; others will give opportunities for using only a few subjects. The teacher, when the class is choosing a project, will naturally try to suggest one that is rich in content and which will last at least a term. But on the other hand he should not subordinate the real needs felt by the pupils to such considerations. It is better to take up a project which will provide work for only a short time and will not bring in very many subjects than to bring pressure to bear on children to make them choose a project for which they feel little need, even though, from the teacher's point of view, it may be a much better project. The secret of the success of this way of approaching school work

is the harnessing of the needs and purposes of the child. If a chosen project does not bring in all subjects, then omitted subjects can be dealt with in the ordinary way. If a project is finished quickly, another one can be undertaken.

As far as the mother-tongue is concerned every project will give opportunity for work. When the class is choosing a project there is a good deal of discussion on the subject. Various suggestions are made and considered. The teacher will encourage everyone to take part in these talks and thus a very good opportunity for oral work is given.

One of the things to be done with every project is for each pupil who is working on it to keep a project book. Each pupil has an exercise book in which he writes a careful account of all that is done as the work is going on. These descriptions may be copied into the project book after being corrected by the teacher, and can also, if it is considered, necessary, follow oral work on the subject. It will be realized that pupils find a natural interest in writing a description of something they are doing themselves in which they are keenly interested. The elaborateness of these descriptions in the project books will vary with the class which is doing the project. But in this way both written and oral work can always be linked up with the project.

Usually, in school, when a project is undertaken, certain material is needed for handwork, and certain things have to be done for which the permission of the headmaster is needed. Here again, written work comes in. Letters have to be written to the headmaster for permission to use certain things, to get certain things, to do certain things. Everybody may write such letters or applications and the three or four best may be sent to the headmaster, or he may be asked to come to the class and see all the letters that have been

written. Practice in certain types of written work is thus motivated by the project. With some projects there will naturally be more of such work than with others. In a Post Office project, for example, a lot of the work which has to be done in connexion with learning how to fill in money-order forms, and so on, may be linked up with the project.

In all projects it is necessary for pupils to find out various things. Information is always needed and therefore interest is given to any reading which is done for this purpose. Reading becomes not a lesson but a real thing for a real purpose. When carrying out a project pupils learn to read books or articles because they are anxious to get information which will help them to carry out their purpose. Hence the project method is very valuable in developing the reading habit and in developing in the child the habit of turning to books for necessary information. It will easily be seen what a vital effect the project method has on the teaching of the mother-tongue. Usually, as a matter of fact, when a project is being carried out, it is not so much a matter of persuading children to read, as of providing them with the books and magazines which they want in order to get the information they require. Reading for a real purpose will be an integral part of practically every project.

Thus the project method is not a technique of teaching any particular subject. It is a technique whereby the interest of the child in activity doing something and in carrying out his purposes is used for the benefit of all subjects. If the project method is used the mother-tongue benefits along with other subjects. It is also in a position of peculiar advantage in that it will come into *every* project that may be undertaken. Which, of course, only shows the real place of the mother-tongue in life and the place it ought to have in school.

Example of a Project Curriculum

project: *Running a School Post Office*

Reading

Reading anything available in books or magazines on the Post Office and its work, on postal services to other countries. The reading of money-order forms and other documents used in the Post Office. Reading of letters and post cards received through the school 'post office'. Reading the history of the postal service.

Writing

Writing up the project book. Writing out money-order forms. Writing applications to the headmaster for material, etc. Writing letters to friends in school to be delivered through the school 'post office'. Making Christmas cards, Diwali cards, etc., to be sent through the school 'post office'.

Oral Work

Describing the postman and his work. A short speech on the town or village Post Office and what is usually seen there. Suggestions for improvements. Conversation on the Post Office. A talk from a postman or from the postmaster on the Post Office followed by questions from pupils.

Handwork

Making a pillar box for the school 'post office'. Making a telephone to be used from one room to another. Making envelopes to be used in sending letters in school through the school 'post office'. Making greetings cards. Collecting stamps and mounting them.

Drawing

Pictures on greetings cards. Pictures of a postman and of a Post Office.

Arithmetic

Arithmetic which is needed in connexion with sending money-orders, calculating amounts of fees. Buying of stamps. Sums on postage due. Calculating costs of making envelopes. Calculations in connexion with measurements necessary in making envelopes. Sums on wages of postmen, etc. Rates of postage to different countries and sums on postage on different articles.

Geography

Following the course of letters to different countries and different places by different routes. How letters are carried.

History

The history of the postal service (elementary).

Morals

Consideration for others in answering letters promptly. Putting proper postage on letters and parcels.

XIII

STORY-TELLING

IN TELLING a story the first thing is to select a suitable one. The suitability of the story will be determined by the audience, their age and stage of development, their knowledge and attitude to life. So when the teacher is selecting a story to tell he must keep in mind the children to whom he is going to tell it.

When choosing a story for small children the teacher must remember that the child is interested in his present life, in what is going on round about him, and in the things with which he comes in contact each day. The stories he likes are therefore stories that are concerned with his everyday life, and with the things he commonly sees, knows and handles. Very small children, who are chiefly interested in themselves and who are themselves the centre of their universe, are therefore interested in stories about themselves and about what they have done, whether the story be imaginary or not. If the child can be the centre of the story he will be well pleased. A little later, about the time when the child begins coming to school, he likes stories about children who do the things he does, about the animals he meets and sees or of which he has heard or seen in pictures. The principle according to which the teacher will make his selection, then, is that the story should be connected with the actual life experiences of the children to whom it is to be told. He will seldom go wrong if he keeps to this.

The second thing that the teacher must keep in mind when selecting a story is that the child likes clear-cut stories, simple and straightforward, and above all stories with action

in them. This is a commonplace yet it must be continually kept in mind.

After the first or second year of school the child will begin to appreciate fairy stories and wonder tales. A word of warning should be given about fairy stories. The teacher should be careful never to tell stories which will make children afraid. Numbers of 'fairy tales' are of this nature and should be rigorously avoided. There are enough things in the world to bring fear into the child's life without our gratuitously increasing them. There are plenty of wonder tales which can be told without using those which will cause the child to be afraid or which will run the risk of causing him to be afraid. The same is true of stories with unhappy endings or with tragedies in them. We sometimes do not realize how seriously the child takes the story that he hears nor how he lives through them as they are told. When someone is killed or suffers, the child suffers too. Again, there is plenty of suffering in the world and in the lives of most, and there is no point in increasing it unnecessarily. Some children are much more sensitive than others, and the teacher will have to choose stories according to the children.

There should be plenty of conversation in stories for small children in the lower classes, and there should be plenty of repetition. The small child is very fond of stories where the same sentence or the same phrase or the same situation keeps on coming in again and again. Especially in the first class should the teacher always try to find stories where this happens. He himself can usually adapt stories so as to bring in the same sentences in conversation a number of times.

Thus a story for small children should be connected with things they know, should have plenty of action, plenty of conversation, plenty of repetition, and should be told, of course, in simple words with which the child is thoroughly familiar.

When telling a story the teacher should have a purpose in mind. It may be simply to give pleasure to the children and to entertain them. This will be a very common purpose especially with small children. It is also a very important purpose. Joy giving is most important, and we usually do not give nearly enough attention to it. Our schools should be happy places, but too often they are not. One way to increase the happiness in school and to get a relaxation of the usual tense atmosphere is by means of stories. Story-telling establishes a relationship between children and teacher which helps the teacher to create the right atmosphere in his class and to bring joy and happiness into the lives of his pupils. This will always be one of the main objects of telling stories.

At the same time there may be other purposes in mind, especially as the child gets a bit older. All his life there will be great pleasure in hearing or reading a story. Whoever tells a story, whatever else they want to do, will always have in mind the giving of pleasure. But there are other educational values in telling stories which the teacher will keep in mind and which will influence his choice of stories, and his way of telling them.

1. The teacher will wish to help the child to think clearly and in logical sequence. There is no finer means for this than the story. Listening to or telling a story is one of the best ways of learning to think with logical sequence.

2. The teacher may wish the child to develop his imagination and train his emotions. The story again is probably the best means for doing this. A child's imagination will certainly be developed by first hearing stories and then by gradually beginning to write them for himself. And there is no finer way of developing appreciation of the beautiful in life and morality than the story. We can use no better way of presenting the ideals

that we wish our pupils to carry out in their lives than by the story, as long as we remember that the telling of it is only the beginning of the process and that unless the emotion issues in action afterwards we have wasted our time as far as training emotions or morals is concerned.

3. Another purpose the teacher may have before him when telling a story is training in taste. A child's literary taste and his appreciation of good language, can be trained very effectively by stories, and it is never too early to start this training. Thus the teacher when telling his story will also be paying attention to the words and expressions he uses, because even in the first class he is laying the foundations for the development of the literary taste of his children.

How should a story be told ?

As a general rule it is far better to tell a story than to read it, especially to a class. It does not matter so much with the individual child who sits on your knee and is interested in the pictures in the book as you go along. But if the teacher has a class in front of him, it is essential that he tells the story, and not reads it. Otherwise he will not get the most out of it. If the story is told by the teacher, then it is the teacher's own story. His personality comes into it. The connexion with the audience is far stronger and closer. It is far easier to hold the attention of the class. The whole process is far more real and far more alive if the teacher tells the story with his eyes on his class.

Should the teacher learn the story off by heart ? This, again, is not a wise thing to do as a rule. A person, unless he is very exceptional, rarely tells a story that he has learnt by heart as well as he tells it when he uses the words as they come. It is absolutely necessary, of course, that the teacher should know his story. It is fatal to have to pause to look

at the book. But that is a different thing from learning it by heart. Naturally, individuals vary and if the teacher finds that he gets on better by learning the story by heart, then he should do so. Generally, however, there will be more life and more spontaneity in the telling of the story if the teacher, who is not a trained actor, does not learn the words in which he is going to tell his story. There are often, however, certain sentences which ought to be learnt by heart. If there is a sentence that is repeated several times, as there will be in good stories for little ones, then that sentence must be learned by heart as the children will not countenance any variations in it. The teacher will find himself corrected if he does make a variation. It is sometimes a good thing also to learn by heart the first sentence or two and the last sentence or two.

It goes without saying that for story-telling, as for everything else connected with teaching, careful preparation is necessary, especially for young teachers. Some people recommend that the young story-teller should write out the story when he is preparing it. This is a matter in which individuals vary a great deal but many people find that writing it out is not a real help. It is usually a better method of preparation to go over the story orally, saying it out aloud just as if it were being told to a class. This may be done two or three times and is probably the best way of preparation. Gradually, of course, as the teacher gets more practice and experience it will become less necessary to do this. But for teachers starting out on their work this method of preparation can be strongly recommended.

The teacher must be interested in the story he is telling. If he is not interested in it himself he cannot expect his audience to be interested. His heart and soul must be in the telling of the story. He must enter into the feelings of the characters in the story. It should be a real thing to him and not just a

job to be got through. This is true of all teaching work, of course, but it is especially necessary in story-telling and should not be difficult for most teachers to accomplish.

Needless to say the teacher must know his story well. This does not mean simply knowing the sequence of incidents in it. It means also knowing the setting and the background of the story. It means knowing about the country where the action of the story takes place, possibly about the customs of that country. It means understanding the characters in the story so that their actions can be appreciated. The teacher must know his characters so that he can make them live as he tells the story. He must understand the circumstances in which his characters live and work. He must understand their social and physical environment. This is all included in knowing the story. In other words the teacher has to be saturated with his subject if he is to do it justice.

The story must be told in words that fit. It must be told in words that are interesting, and which the audience will appreciate. The teacher should tell the story in his natural voice changing his rate of speaking where the tempo of the story demands it, making good use of the pause, which can be most effective in sustaining and arresting interest if it tends to flag.

One of the most important elements in story-telling is the attitude of the teacher towards the work of story-telling and towards his audience, that is, his pupils.

'By the story-teller's attitude is meant her bearing towards the work she is attempting to do. Does she respect it? . . . Does she believe that through the medium of story-telling she may achieve results difficult or impossible of realization without it? Unless she has a regard for the dignity and importance of story-telling that amounts almost to reverence she cannot be depended upon to achieve the best results. The artist who moves multitudes by his

picture, statue, or sonata is one who believes that music, painting, and sculpture are great and noble arts, and that only he who labours with devotion, and even great sacrifice, is worthy of being a toiler in its ranks.

The story-teller, like the artist, must believe the spoken tale to be a medium through which he can touch all that is best in the heart and mind of the child. Her work must be marked by enthusiasm, sincerity, and belief, or it will carry no conviction. Regardless of the mastery of language and principles of structure she may have, or what her preparation may have been, without these three essential qualifications—sincerity, enthusiasm, and conviction—she will be as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.'[1]

When the teacher is telling a story he should have in his mind a series of pictures which he will describe. That is, he will develop his visual memory and his imagination. If he can do this and can see clearly in his mind this series of pictures, then his story will live. His telling will be much freer than if he is concentrating on words and on remembering words. There will be no struggle to remember particular words. He has the picture before him in his mind and describes it. This visualizing in pictures is a very important matter in training oneself to tell stories.

Very often stories need adapting. Sometimes they are too short, and sometimes they are too long. Sometimes the teacher will get hold of a good story which has names and other details which are not suitable for his particular audience. He has then to change the setting of the story. This has often to be done with an English story which an Indian teacher wishes to use, or even with a story from a different part of India. There is no reason at all why a story should not be very greatly changed to suit a particular place and audience. The teacher has got the idea, whether it came from England

[1] K. D. Cather, *Religious Education through Story-Telling*, The Abingdon Press, p. 206.

or anywhere else, and he uses the idea in a story of his own which he puts into the right setting. Such adaptation must be prepared beforehand. It cannot be left to the inspiration of the moment. Very often the language has to be adapted. This is not difficult if the teacher is not in the habit of learning his stories off by heart, as he will then choose his language as he goes along. There is no difficulty in this for the teacher of experience, but the young teacher would be well advised to give some thought to the words he is going to use for some time after he starts teaching, especially with stories for the first class.

When telling a story there is no need for any attempt at oratory. The story should be told in a simple way just as if the teacher were telling it to his own children in his own home. There should be no frills, but simple words, a clear easy delivery, speaking not too quickly, but varying as the action of the story demands, laying emphasis on the words which are important in the action, but above all being as natural as possible. Gesture should be used only when it comes absolutely naturally, as it would be used in ordinary conversation with a friend. Here again people vary. The gesture that will seem very forced in one man will appear quite natural in another. The only rule is to be natural.

There is one point that is worth emphasizing: the teacher should be at some pains to tell, now and then, a story which is humorous. It will not necessarily be one that is humorous to the teacher, but one which brings up situations which the children will think are funny. They should then be allowed to enjoy such stories to the full. School should be a happy place, and it would help school life immensely if we took such opportunities as stories give us for bringing in some humour. It is perhaps not often thought of as part of the work of the teacher, but a sense of humour is very necessary for a full and rich life, and we cannot start early enough to help our

children to cultivate it. Too many of our children get far too few laughs out of life.

The story should always be an opportunity for activity on the part of pupils. Most children will naturally be moved to activity by a story, especially if it has been well chosen. They will want to go and play the story and to make things that are necessary for that play. They will like to talk about it and to say over again the sentences that have been repeated a number of times in it. They will like to read it aloud if it is in any book to which they have access. They will want to tell the story themselves. The teacher should always give opportunities for such activities : conversation on the story, re-telling it, reading it if possible, handwork suggested by it, acting it, drawing pictures suggested by it. All children will not want to do all the things that are suggested but all will want to do some of them.

In re-telling a story with older children it is often interesting for them to tell it as though they were one of the characters in the story. They will then try to look at things through the eyes of this character and tell the story in the first person. This is especially useful both for teacher and children in dealing with a story which is fairly well known. It makes a fresh approach and makes the story alive again after it may have become stale. This is also useful in helping to train the imaginative powers of children. They learn to enter into the feelings of the characters in the story.

XIV

TEACHING ADULTS TO READ

TEACHING ADULTS to read is a very different thing from teaching children to read. A different kind of subject-matter in the primers and books is required, a different method is needed, and the psychological approach must be different. While the language of the books used in teaching adults to read must be simple, the subject-matter, as far as possible, should be such that adults will be interested in it. One of the greatest difficulties which is met with in this work is the lack of interest in those who are illiterate. If possible we must find subject-matter and a method that will interest them. It is easy enough with those who are keen; but they are not usually the majority, and it is methods of dealing with the majority that we have to consider.

Those who undertake this work quite commonly find that illiterate adults, especially villagers, cannot see, much use in learning to read. It will usually tax all the ingenuity of the teacher to persuade them to begin to learn. Somehow or other this first problem has to be solved, and the adult persuaded of the practical value of being able to read. Often volunteers go out enthusiastically to start making adults literate, but their ardour is damped because they have not realized that a great many adults are not nearly so keen to learn to read as the volunteers are to teach them.

In different parts of India different methods have been tried by which the villager's enthusiasm may be aroused. In some places in Madras State the government has adopted the scheme of putting items of news and other interesting things on walls in villages. Those who cannot read then see for themselves the advantages that those who can, have over

them. In some places competitions are arranged between villages and a shield is given to the village in the competition area which has most illiterates made literate in a certain time, or to the village in the competition area which first becomes completely literate. In some places individuals take up a village, become its 'patron', and take a personal interest in the village and its people. These 'patrons' establish a library in the village and by their personal work and influence seek to create an interest in literacy among the villagers. In some places little handbills are printed in big type on a subject of vital interest to the villager, such as health, agriculture, law, etc. These are distributed in the village. It is then not difficult for those who cannot read to see what they lose by their inability to do so, especially if there are some in the village who can read.

Sometimes those who are seeking to rouse interest in learning to read, read from books to the villagers in whom they are interested, so that they may know what they can get from newspapers and books. A worker using this method may stop at a vital point in a story and tell his audience that the rest of the story is in such and such a book, and that when they can read they will be able to finish it.

Riddles and conundrums are printed on papers with the answers. The worker reads the conundrum to his audience but refuses to read the answer. This the people must learn to read for themselves. Any such method which gives a practical demonstration of the advantages of being able to read will be useful.

The adult who is not interested in learning to read can be shown the practical advantages of a knowledge of how to read. He can be shown that if he knows how to read he will not be at the mercy of the money-lender, but he will be able to read receipts and contracts. He will be able to make a better use of his leisure, and will have much more pleasure in life. He

will be able to find better methods of agriculture and so increase his income. He will be a more intelligent citizen with a far greater knowledge of what is going on in his own country and in the world. He will be able to use his vote more wisely, and this will indirectly affect his income. He will be able to read and write letters for himself. A knowledge of reading will enable him to improve his own life and the life of his village. The best way to impress these things on the village adult is not by lecturing him, but by staging plays which will show the things we are trying to bring home to him. Simple dramatic situations showing the value of a knowledge of how to read are much more impressive than mere talking.

The adult should be assured that he is not going to be asked to go to school again. Adult schools are successful here and there, but there is far more chance of success in this work if it is done individually. That is, the teacher should not aim at having a class, but should prefer to deal with one adult pupil at a time. Many adults do not like the idea of going back to school. They do not like the idea of a class, but they have not so much objection to working individually with one who comes to them in their homes to help them.

Workers should also take great pains to explain exactly what is involved. They should show the books and papers, the primer and the follow-up books which have been specially prepared for the work. They should show their prospective pupils that learning to read is not nearly so difficult as they suppose. Adults learn to read very much more quickly than children do. It is important also to make a careful selection of the first ones with whom to start work. Workers should be sure that the one they pick to start with is enthusiastic. There will be a big chance of failure in the village altogether if a lukewarm subject is picked on with whom to begin the experiment. An attempt should be made to select one who

is particularly bright and intelligent and a potential leader. Then he can be made an example for the rest. If special efforts are made to get him through the primer quickly and on to simple books, the sight of his progress will do more than anything else to convince the doubters and create a desire for a knowledge of how to read.

Workers for adult literacy should emphasize from the beginning that every one who is learning should, as soon as he has advanced a little way, become a teacher himself and should start someone else off. Dr Laubach's famous motto is 'One teach one', and if this is followed out then a literate India is in sight.

'Nearly every bright adult, after learning a lesson can teach it to someone else. This has several advantages where it can be done. It gives him a strong incentive for learning, fixes the lesson firmly in his mind, and lets him know the joy of helping others and counting for something in his neighbourhood. Moreover, India's 27 crores of illiterates over five years of age can be taught to read only with the help of millions of unpaid teachers.

When a man (or woman) is teaching for the first time, instead of interfering and causing him to feel discouraged, let him do all he possibly can by himself. If he does well, give him a nod of enthusiastic approval. If he makes a mistake say: "The usual way we teach at this point is to say . . ." After the lesson, tell him what a clever teacher he is. Give him a few suggestions and many words of encouragement. Inspire him with the ambition to serve his fellows. Then he will go out zealous to teach everybody. Such enthusiasm is more important than smooth technique.' [1]

There are difficulties in this matter of each learner becoming a teacher. Where it can be carried out it is ideal. But it is much easier to carry out in some languages than it

[1] Dr F. C. Laubach, *Teaching Illiterates*, C. L. S. Madras. pp. 3-4.

is in others. It means that the method of teaching and the books must be extremely simple and 'fool-proof', so that practically no training is needed in order to be able to take someone else through the primer after a learner has been through it himself. This is not possible in all languages, but wherever it is possible, emphasis should be laid on it. The enthusiasm of the newly-made literate will communicate itself to his new pupil.

Those who are taking up this work of teaching adults to read have to be careful to deal with adults as adults, and not as children. There is often a danger when teachers do this work, because they are so accustomed to dealing with children when teaching, that they deal with adults as though they were children, and there are unfortunate results.

We have seen that it is better for the work to be done individually and not in classes. The worker with adults cannot expect them to come to him as children do. He has to go to them. The teacher of adults has to forget all about his *izzat*, and about what he thinks is due to him. He is a servant, and must be prepared to put up with the results of whims and lack of interest in a way that he would never do in school. He must let no personal considerations come between him and his aim of a literate India.

The teacher of adults should never allow himself to lose his temper and scold. The teacher of children should not do so either, but if he does happen to do so, the children will come back the next day. If a teacher loses his temper with an adult, the adult will quite likely tell him what he thinks of him and will not continue the next day. It will be the end of things. Infinite patience and self-control are required.

The attitude of the worker with adults should always be encouraging. He should be the friend of his adult pupil and the experience of teaching and learning to read should be an experience of friendship. The teacher must set him-

self to inspire. He must be careful not to let his adult pupil lose face. He should never say 'No', but should rather say 'You mean this, don't you?'. He should avoid sarcasm and ridicule as the plague. It should be avoided with children, but the child cannot escape from school. The adult is more fortunate than the child and will simply refuse to go on. Teacher and learner should be on an equality, and nothing the teacher does should cause his adult pupil to have any feeling of inferiority or any feeling that his teacher is patronizing him. There should be unfailing politeness and courtesy shown by teacher to pupil. The attitude of the teacher must be one of real friendship, and all that is done should be guided by this principle.

'The illiterate feels inferior and discouraged about his abilities. Being sensitive and having often failed, he has lost all hope of learning to read. Our work is to show him that he can learn quickly and delightfully. Every step must be so short and easy that the ordinary man can take it without difficulty and find the joy of achievement. Adult minds differ widely from child minds and require different teaching methods. The illiterate adult has a far more extensive range of experience and vocabulary than a child. He just needs to recognize on paper the words that he knows.

Even a fine instructor of children will teach adults badly unless he adapts his methods to them, since adults respond well to being treated, not in a patronizing manner, but courteously as if they were the patrons. Boys and girls have to stay at their lessons whether they like them or not, but adults will walk away the moment they become uninterested or discouraged, or are ridiculed. They cannot be compelled. They must be attracted to return and bring others, by being kept radiantly happy all the time.'[1]

With regard to the actual methods which are to be used, experiments are being made all over the country.[2] There

[1] Laubach, op. cit., p. 1.
[2] See Laubach, *Toward a Literate World*, Chapter VIII, Columbia University Press.

is the story method, the key word method, the phonetic method, the picture method. In some parts, as with Urdu and Panjabi, a mixture of the story method and the phonetic method has been found to be very successful and primers in both languages have been compiled according to this method. In other parts an extensive use of pictures has been made.

Teachers and others who are taking up this work of adult literacy will naturally use the primers that have been prepared for use in their own particular areas. They should be careful to see that they teach the adults in whom they are interested the language they *speak*. For instance one who speaks Panjabi in his everyday life should learn to read Panjabi. He may go on to Urdu later, especially if he learns to read Panjabi in the Persian script. But it is important that what the adult learns to read should be his real mother-tongue.

As a great deal of this work is still in an experimental stage, all those who take it up should be on the look-out for improvements that can be made in method, in primers, and in other books. One very important point which all workers in this field must keep in mind is the necessity for not relaxing when the primer is finished, and not allowing the adult learner to relax either. Follow-up books, written especially for adults in simple language, a little more difficult than that of the primer should be used after the primer is finished until the learner is able to tackle ordinary magazines or books or newspapers. There is a great deal of scope here for contributions during the next few years. There are not a great number of suitable follow-up books in existence in many languages, and these will have to be provided in large numbers. Otherwise a lot of the effort spent in taking learners through the primers will be wasted and they will never become really literate.

APPENDIX I

A HINDI WRITING SCALE

TEACHERS usually have a general idea of what the standard of the writing of their pupils should be. But it is a very general idea and, except from the remarks of the Inspector, they do not have much opportunity of judging whether the writing of their pupils compares favourably or not with that of children in other schools. When one examines large numbers of specimens of writing from different schools, one is impressed by the fact that the standard varies very greatly from school to school. This depends to some extent on the teaching, but another reason is the absence of any objective scale according to which the standard of writing in different classes may be judged.

A scale, such as the one shown here, does not do away with the subjective element. The teacher has to make his or her own judgement when comparing the pupil's writing with the specimens shown in the scale. But it at least does present an objective criterion, which reduces very greatly the uncertainty of subjective judgement and gives a very fair indication of the general standard in different schools, and also of what can be achieved. The scale can be used both to evaluate work done and to set before pupils a standard for their writing.

The method of preparing the scale was briefly this. The pupils of several schools were asked to copy on a small piece of paper a certain passage in their best handwriting. All classes from I to VIII were included. The pupils were also asked to give their names and school, since a copy by the student on good drawing paper with India ink is necessary in the case of a specimen being chosen for the scale. Copies written with ordinary ink on cheap paper do not make good lithographic blocks for printing. Specimens of writing were also taken from teachers so that there should be some really good examples for the top of the scale.

With several hundred specimens to choose from, we then

set to work. Eight teachers who were known for their carefulness in the teaching of writing served as the preliminary selection committee. First we chose what we considered the best specimen and marked it No. 1. Then we chose the worst specimen and marked it No. 10, since we were aiming at making a scale of ten specimens. Then we chose specimens Nos. 2, 3, 4, etc. always trying to get a specimen that was clearly inferior in quality from the one above but not too much inferior. After much shifting and substituting and eliminating, we had ten specimens in line which the entire committee agreed were placed in order of merit. We felt reasonably satisfied that each specimen was inferior to the one above by a noticeable degree and also superior to the one just below it to about the same degree.

Now we were ready to try out our tentative scale. We sent the ten specimens on separate sheets to various schools and asked all teachers to arrange them, to the best of their judgement, in order of merit. No teacher was allowed to see the other teachers make their arrangements before they themselves had had their try, so that their choice would not be influenced by what they had seen others do. Of course we had put distinguishing marks on each specimen so that we could easily note the arrangement in each case. Such marks were used as would give no hint of order to those grading the specimens. Two hundred teachers attempted the classification. We found that 90 per cent of the teachers agreed on the order of eight of the specimens. The agreement on specimens Nos. 5 and 6 was only 60 per cent. Often the order of these two was inverted. So we concluded that the difference between the two was not great enough. Therefore we eliminated both of them and substituted one that we thought was about half-way between the two in quality. When this was substituted in the scale, 90 per cent of the teachers agreed on the order of merit. The worst specimen was eliminated as being unnecessary, this leaving eight for the completed scale. We attached arbitrary evaluation (90, 80, 70, etc.) numbers to each specimen as can be seen in the scale. These marks are not to be taken seriously in a mathematical sense, but only as indicating the sequence. We could just as well have labelled them A, B, C, etc.

The final step was to grade 3,000 handwriting specimens

विश्रामपुर लेखन माप।

९० हिन्दुस्थान में तीन मौसिम होते हैं। गर्मी के मौसिम में खेत कट जाते हैं और अनाज गाहा जाता है इस में शादियां होती हैं। खेतों में खाद भी डाला जाता है, और घरों की मरम्मत होती है

८० हिन्दुस्थान में तीन मौसिम होते हैं। गर्मी के दिनों में खेत कट जाते हैं और अनाज गाहा जाता है। इस मौसिम में, शादिया होती हैं खेतों में खाद भी डाला जाता है।

७० हिन्दुस्थान मे तीन मौसिम होते है। गर्मी के दिनो में खेत कट जाते है और अनाज गाहा है। इस मौसिम मे शादियां होती है। खेतों में खाद भी डाला जाता है और घरो की मरम्मत है होती है।

६० हिन्दुस्थान मे तीन मौसिम होते हैं गर्मी के दिनो मे खेत कट जाता हैं, अनाज गाहा है इस मौसम मौसिम मे शादिया होती है, खेतो मे खाद भी डाला जाता है और घरो की मरम्मत

५० हिन्दुस्थान में तीन मौसिम होती है। गर्मी के दिनों में खेत कट जाते हैं। और अनाज गाहा है। इस मौसिम में शादियां होती हैं। खेतो में खाद भी डाला जाता हैं।

४० हिन्दुस्थान में तीन मौसिम होते होती है गर्मी के में खेत कट जाते हैं और अनाज अनाज गाहा जाता है इस मौसिम में शादिया

३० में [illegible] मौसिम होते हैं [illegible] गर्मी के दिनों में खेत कट जाते हैं और अनाज होती हैं खेतों में खाद भी

२० हिदस्ना नमे तीनमौसमहोतेहै गमेकेदिनो मेखेतकटजातेहै और अनाज गाहाजाताहै

A HINDI WRITING SCALE

with the aid of the scale. This gave us the average score for each class from I to VIII. It was found that the average score in schools where the teachers were doing good work was at least ten points (one specimen) better than in schools in which rather careless work was being done. Therefore we decided not to take the average score of all schools for the norms, but the average score of the better schools, because these norms are easily obtainable in any school where proper attention is being paid to handwriting. Here are the norms which should constitute the minimum standard any teacher should consider satisfactory.

It may be confusing at first for a teacher to see the norm for class I given as 35 and that for class II as 45 when there is no specimen labelled 35 or 45. But norms refer to groups rather than to individuals. Not all individuals can be trained to write with the same quality. Therefore there will be some pupils in class I who write with quality 40 and a few with quality 50. But there will also be some who write with quality 30 or 20. The average score for the class should not be less than 35. An individual who writes better than 30, even though he does not quite attain 40, just reaches the norm for his class (the average score expected in his class.)

Class I	35
Class II	45
Class III	60
Class IV	70
Class V	75
Class VI to VII	80

No individual or teacher need be satisfied with these norms. A higher goal is far from impossible of attainment. These norms are not to be considered the passing mark although the passing mark should not be too far below the norm. The passing mark should vary with every class.

HOW TO USE THE SCALE:

Take a specimen of handwriting which one of your pupils has produced and match it with the specimen in the scale it most resembles in quality. First put it beside specimen No. 90. Ask yourself, 'Is it as good as this?' 'No, it is not.' Then compare it to No. 80. 'Is it that good?' 'No.' Then

compare it to No. 70. It seems to be inferior to No. 70 also. Therefore it must be compared to No. 60. Perhaps it seems better than No. 60. Compare it with 70 again. Then score it, either 60 or 70, according as you think it compares more nearly with 60 or with 70. Or, if it seems to be about half way in between, you may mark it 65. With practice one does not need to compare the specimens to be evaluated with the top specimens of the scale but can immediately compare it to one of approximately the same value.

Some writing scales contain upwards of twenty specimens. But the more specimens you have, the more difficult the use of the scale is to those who are not well-trained in judging handwriting. We give only eight specimens as being most practical.

Since most pupils can write considerably better than they usually do, not only the specially prepared penmanship exercises of the pupils should be evaluated, but the ordinary work of the pupil should also be graded. The pupils should be shown the discrepancy between their good work and their usual work, and be encouraged to make their best writing their standard production.

Pupils should be trained to use the scale. The teacher might say to the pupil, 'Look at this example of your writing. How would you grade it on the scale ? Yes, that is right, it is barely 50. In fact I think it is closer to 40. Yesterday you got 70 when you were writing your best. See if you can't always write 70 or at least 60.' Pupils should be encouraged to better their handwriting but they will know if they are improving only if they have some of their old written work to compare it to, or use the scale.

There is little use in the teacher using the scale every day or even every week. Improvement in writing is so slow that probably there will be little difference noticeable in the best writing of the pupil in less than half a year, unless the work of the pupil was careless, in which case a considerable improvement may be noticeable even in a week. The best way for a teacher to use the scale is to judge and record the work of all pupils at the beginning of the year and then again in the middle of the year and finally at the end of the year. If he has kept a record of the scores, he can easily see what

progress the pupil is making. Otherwise the teacher will not need the scale excepting to point out to the pupil that his ordinary writing is not up to the mark of what he can do when he makes an effort to write well.

As far as the pupil is concerned, the scale can be made regular use of. The pupil is always under temptation to write fast and carelessly and if the scale reminds him of what he can do when he tries to do his best, and can always be encouraged to check his productions. Some claim that it is not good to keep the scale exposed so that pupils see the poor specimens of handwriting in it, but when they have been taught that the poor specimens are what they should avoid and the good specimens are what they should always strive to equal or even better, there need be no fear of the psychological effects of the poor specimens. In fact it is disgust with the unsatisfactory that makes us strive for the more satisfactory.

APPENDIX II

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS will be found useful in connexion with various aspects of the teaching of the mother-tongue. Most of them will be chiefly useful as a source of suggestions; and ideas and methods given in them will have to be modified and adapted to Indian languages and conditions. Some have been written for Indian schools.

Ballard, P. B., *Fundamental English*, Pupils' and Teachers' Books. University of London Press.

— (Editor), *The Practical Infant Teacher*, Vols II, III and V. The New Era Publishing Co.

Dakin, D., *Talks to Beginning Teachers of English*. D. C. Heath & Co.

Dippie, H., *Suggestions for Primary School Teachers*. Oxford University Press.

Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers. Board of Education, London.

Instruction in Indian Primary Schools. Oxford University Press.

Labhu Mall, *The Teaching of Writing* (Urdu). Masha'l Press, Kharar, Punjab.

Lamborn, E. A. G., *Expression in Speech and Writing*. Oxford University Press.

Macnee, E. A. (Editor), *Instruction in Indian Secondary Schools*. Oxford University Press.

Ryburn, W. M., and Pundit Hans Raj, *Play Way Urdu*, Books I-III. Oxford University Press.

Ryburn, W. M., *The Progressive School*. Oxford University Press.

—, *Suggestions for the Teaching of English in India*. Oxford University Press.

Sampson, G., *English for the English*. Cambridge University Press.

Smith, E. J., and Labhu Mall, *Teachers' Guide*. Gulab Singh & Sons.
Teaching of English in England, The. Board of Education, London.
Teaching Poetry. Oxford University Press.
Wellock, M. J., *A Modern Infant School*. University of London Press.

INDEX

Abstract subjects, 80
Æsop's *Fables*, 122
Analysis of paragraphs, 48, 50
Anthologies, 47
Arabic grammar, 91
Articulation, 21, 25
Artificial writing, 70, 71
Assignment method, 92, 141ff.
Assignments, advantages of, 146-9
—, difficulties of, 149-52
—, functions of, 146
—, preparation of, 146-51
—, use of, 51, 52, 141ff.
Atmosphere of classroom, 74, 113
Ayer, J. Y., 109n.

Bachchon ka Tohfa, 27n., 102n.
Bad speech, 21, 25
Ballard, P. B., 5n, 107n.
Blackboards, 60, 61
Booklets, 78
Book reviews in class, 18, 81
Books as aids to teaching reading, 31-3
—for enjoyment, 40, 41
—, word, 74
Breathing, 24
— exercises, 26

Cather, K. D., 165n.
Children's Newspaper, The, 52
Choral speech, 107
Classics, love of, 55, 56
Class libraries, 47, 51
Class magazine, 81
Compensatory activity, 25
Composition, 77, 79
Comprehension, training in, 48
Conversation in teaching reading, 36
— in written work, 77-8
— periods, 13, 17
Cook, H. Caldwell, 17
Co-operative work, 151
Copying, 150, 151
Correction work, 84-6
Corrective work, 22, 123
Correlation, 153, 154
Craftwork, 13
Creative faculties, 8, 9
— work, 108, 110-11, 112-19
Criticism by the class, 117

Debates, 20
Defective speech, 24, 25
Descriptions, 79
Dictation, 75, 94, 95
Dictionaries, training in use of, 37, 44, 99
Dramatics, writing of, 78, 82

Dramatic work, 13-14, 18-19, 108, 121, 122
——, in teaching reading, 37, 41
Drawing, teaching, 60, 61
Drill in use of words, 83, 89
Drill work, 120, 121

Education in schools, true, 5
Emotional life and the mother-tongue, 7
English for the English, 5
English in England, The teaching of, 11-12
English and the phonetic method of teaching reading, 33
Essays, 79-81
—, five-minute, 79
—, subjects for, 80-1
Examinations, evils of, 45
Exercises for use with reader, 49-50
Expressional work, written, 38
Expression in writing, 72, 90
—, medium of, 7-8
Expressive work, 9, 19

Faulty speech, 21
Free work period, 115

Games, 14, 15, 22, 24
— for primary classes, 124-32
— for middle classes, 132-40
— in teaching reading, 28, 29, 34, 35
Gates, A. I., 109n.
Gestures in reciting poetry, 107
Grading writing, 64, 65
Grammar, beginning the teaching of, 89, 90
Grammatical exercises, 49, 131, 134, 135, 139
— mistakes, 23
— terms, 90
Group work, 116, 117, 151
Growth and development, 7

Hadow, Report, The, 4
Handbook of suggestions for Teachers, 49
Handwork, 13, 42
History, teaching of, 53
Hobbies, 42
Home, co-operation with the, 25
Humour and the story, 166

Ideas, expression of, 4, 5
Illustrations, 32
Imitation, 22, 64, 71
Improvization, 18-19, 78
Index, use of, 44, 54
Individual differences, 147
— work, 59, 73, 85, 116, 141ff.
— — with adults, 169-72

Inductive method in teaching grammar, 90, 91
Infant School, A Modern, 13, 29n.
Inferiority, feeling of, 26
Informal talks, 118
Information, reading for, 42, 43, 51, 54
Instruction in Indian Primary Schools, 125
Instruments of writing, 60, 62, 66
Intensive work and the reader, 46, 47-50, 53
Interest in reading, 28, 29, 41
— — reading material, 31, 47, 53
—— written work, 71, 72, 73

Kimmins, Dr, 11

Labhu Mall, 34
Lamborn, E. A. Greening, 11
Laubach, Dr F., 171, 173
Learning by heart, 51
Lectures, Littleman, 17
Letters, 70, 78, 82
—, learning to write the, 62
Libraries, 47, 51, 151, 152
Library books, choosing, 58-9
— —, grading, 41, 58
Listening practice, 26
Literature, appreciation of, 55-7
—, introduction to, 48
Logical thinking, 73, 80, 161
Loosening the tongue, exercises in, 26

Magazines and papers, 43, 52, 53
Magazines, class, 123-4
—personal, 81
— school, 124
Methods of teaching, 5, 7
Mock interviews, 123
—trials, 123
Mother-tongue, aims in teaching, 7, 8
Muscle control and co-ordination, 60, 61
Mushá' ara, 108

Natural expression, 70-1, 79
News-boards, 55
Newspaper reading, 52, 53
News time, 13
New words and idioms, 35, 37, 58
Nursery rhymes, 14, 22, 23, 63, 102, 103

Observation, 71, 73
Oral work, 10-27, 35, 53, 70, 73, 88, 89, 116, 123, 132, 155
Oral spelling practice, 94
— and written work, correlation of, 38, 70
Outline, in essay-writing, 79

Pamphlets and papers, 43, 44
Panel discussions, 20, 21, 55
Paragraph work, 93
Paraphrasing, 83
—poetry, 104, 107
Pens, reed, 66
Persian grammar, 91
Personality, development of, 7, 8, 10-12
Phonetic method of teaching reading, 30, 32, 33
Phonetics, use of, 23
Physical work, 24
Pictures, 32, 34, 36, 41, 74, 75
— in readers, 39
— — use of, 15, 16, 26, 28, 29, 55, 64
Play, 120-1
Playlets and plays, 19, 41, 77-8, 121-3
Play way exercises, primary classes, 134-7
— — middle classes, 138-40
— methods, 34, 36, 43, 55, 82, 120ff.
— —in teaching spelling, 97-8
Play Way, The, 17n., 120n.
Play Way Urdu Books, 140 n.
Poems, 14, 22, 23, 27, 47, 63
Poems for children, 102
—, reading aloud, 107
—, recitation in unison, 107
Poetry, learning by heart, 104, 105
—, selection of, 102
—, writing, 82
Posture in writing, 65
Practical Infant Teacher, The, 107
Prècis writing, 73, 82
Preparation work, 84, 85
Primary school teachers, 3
Progressive School, The, 120n.
Project book, 155
— curriculum, example of, 157
— method, 28, 34, 42, 55, 153ff.
Pronunciation, 21, 93, 94, 96, 100

Questions, key, 38

Readers, and assignments, 144, 145
—, primary classes, 34, 39-40
—, middle and high classes, 44
—, use of, 45, 46
Reading, aims in, 39
— aloud, 35, 37, 47, 56, 57
— charts, 32, 34
— for enjoyment, 39-43, 51, 53
— for information, 42, 43, 51-4, 156
— habit, 8, 46-7
— in unison, 35
—, method of teaching, 28
—, physical aspects of, 39, 88
— room, 52
Recitation in unison, 107
Riddles, 36
Roe, Frances, 30-1

Sampson, George, 4-5
Selections for readers, 46-7
Self-consciousness, 10, 12
— expression, 12, 26
— government, 17
— reliance, 149
Sentence method in teaching reading, 30, 31, 33, 34, 96
Silent reading, 35, 36, 37, 42, 47
Singing, 14, 22
Skimming, the art of, 54
Smith, E. J., 34
Sounds, similar, 23
Speech difficulties, 25, 26
— habits, 88
— making, 17, 21, 44
— training, 10, 21-7
Spelling, 33, 75
— drill, 96, 97
—, learning, 93, 94
— lists, 95
— match, 97
— mistakes, 86, 99
— rules, 100
Stories, adaptation of, 165
—, educational value of, 161
— for small children, 159, 160
Stories how to tell, 160-162ff.
— in teaching reading, 28, 30, 41
— use of, 14, 15, 22, 47, 49, 50, 73, 78
Story clubs, 118
— method of teaching reading, 30-1
Stuttering, 24, 25
Style in writing, 70, 90
Summaries, 38, 48, 73, 82

Takhties, 65, 66
Teachers of adults, 172, 174
— of the mother-tongue, 2, 3
Teaching Poetry, 104
— methods, 5
— the classics, 55, 56
Text and textbook, 44, 45
Thought and expression, training in, 8
— *and Language*, 5n.
Tongue twisters, 26
Transcription, 75, 93, 94
Urdu and phonetics, 30, 34
—, teaching grammar in, 91

Vocabulary, artificial, 70
—, mastering the, 58, 69

Wellock, M. J., 13, 29
Words and thought, 6
Work Play Books, 109n.
Writing, aim in teaching, 69
—, grading of, 64, 65
—, principles for, 64
—, instruments of, 60, 62, 65
—, muscular co-ordination, 60, 61
Writing, teaching of, 10-12, 60ff.
Written, expressional work, 38
Written work, 69ff., 123, 155-6
Written work suggested exercises for, 75-7

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. No. 1450